THE DAWN OF A NEW RELIGIOUS ERA

PAUL CARUS

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THE DAWN OF A NEW RELIGIOUS ERA

THE DAWN

OF A

NEW RELIGIOUS ERA

AND OTHER ESSAYS

BY

DR. PAUL CARUS

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PREFACE

THIS collection of essays, written from time to time on special occasions during my activity as editor of *The Open Court* and *The Monist,* reflects the changes that have been taking place in recent years all over the religious world. We are now witnessing a reformation which is not a moral rebirth as that of Luther's time, but an intellectual development toward a deeper comprehension of our religious aspirations. We are coming to understand the religious problem in its scientific significance. Biblical criticism, a comparative study of religion and the scientific method in philosophy have broadened our minds, yet we have not lost thereby in religious fervor or devotion to truth. The result is the new era into which the religious world is now entering.

When I took charge of *The Open Court,* in 1888, it was regarded as an ultra-radical and even shockingly blasphemous periodical, and I thought then that the time would slowly come when the very orthodoxy of our traditional religion would finally fall back on the interpretation which I then advocated. The time has come more quickly than I expected. A new orthodoxy has arisen, and the philosophical interpretation of religion will gradually but surely become recognized as the true conception of a scientific theology; in other

words, theonomy, with its scientific conception of God, will replace the old bigoted views of an antiquated theology.

The historical importance of the World's Congress of Religions, held in Chicago in September, 1893,* during the World's Columbian Exposition, has not been under-estimated, but events since then have proved that the Religious Parliament was in advance of the time. Mankind is not yet ripe for its ideals. The Roman Catholic Church, to which we owe in no small degree the realization of the first Religious Parliament, has not favored a renewal of this co-operative gathering. On the contrary, it has set its face against the underlying idea of it, not that the laity or even the

*The World's Congresses of 1893 were held in the City of Chicago from May 15 to October 28, under the direction of an organization which bore the name of The World's Congress Auxiliary of the World's Columbian Exposition.

There were twenty Departments and two hundred and twenty-four General Divisions in which Congresses were held.

These Congresses embraced Woman's Progress, The Public Press, Medicine and Surgery, Temperance, Moral and Social Reform, Commerce and Finance, Music, Literature, Education, Engineering, Art, Government, Science and Philosophy, Social and Economic Science, Labor, Religion, Sunday Rest, Public Health and Agriculture.

The Department of Religion embraced forty-six General Divisions, including the Parliament of Religions.

In announcing the plans for the Religious Congresses the object in view was proclaimed on the title-page of the announcement in these words:

"To unite all religion against all irreligion; to make the Golden Rule the basis of this union; to present to the world in the Religious Congresses to be held in connection with the Columbian Exposition of 1893, the substantial unity of many religions in the good deeds of the religious life; to provide for a World's Parliament of Religions, in which their common aims and common grounds of union may be set forth, and the marvelous religious progress of the Nineteenth Century reviewed; and to facilitate separate and independent Congresses of different religious denominations and organizations, under their own officers, in which their business may be transacted, their achievements presented and their work for the future considered."

By inviting the different Religious Denominations to hold separate and independent Congresses, they were effectually protected against any appearance of surrendering their distinctive characteristics and could safely participate in the Union Congress, called the World's Parliament of Religions

priesthood are opposed, but the hierarchical representatives are afraid that their devotees might become infected with heresy. Unfortunately the leaders in control of the ecclesiastical institutions do not see that the new spirit which is moving through the world today can be made a power for regenerating the dead creed, as has been shown in the mistaken condemnation and suppression of the movement known as Modernism. But the time will come when the new reform will assert itself with that irresistible power which every intellectual movement has shown, so that after a while it will be accepted as a matter of course and be declared a truth which has been recognized—although not always clearly but instinctively—from the very beginning.

In allowing this book to go forth I wish it Godspeed, and hope it will recommend itself to the reading public as the product of honest labor in the search for truth.

PAUL CARUS.

October, 1916.

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THE DAWN OF A NEW RELIGIOUS ERA.

THE Parliament of Religions, which sat in Chicago from September 11 to September 27, 1893, was a great surprise to the world. When the men who inaugurated it invited representatives of all the great religions of the earth to meet in conference, their plan was looked upon with misgiving, if not with ridicule. The feasibility and the advisability of their undertaking were doubted. The greatest and most powerful churches, it was said, would not be represented. The Vatican, for instance, regards the Roman Catholic Church as the only soul-saving power, with exclusive authority to loose or bind. To allow a comparison between it and other churches on a footing of equality, to appeal to reason, to provoke and favor such an appeal, or to submit to a decision after argument, would be tantamount to the recognition of reason, or logic, or science, as a higher and the highest test of truth. Like reasons, it was thought, would more or less influence other denominations, for almost all of them claim to be based upon a special divine revelation which is above argument, so as to render the mere doubt of it sin.

In spite of all these doubts and fears, the Parliament of Religions was convened, and it proved an extraordinary success. The work grew rapidly under the

hands of its promoters, so that the time originally allotted to it had to be increased until it extended over seventeen days. Although discussion had been excluded from the programme so as to avoid friction, it could not be entirely controlled. Nevertheless a good spirit presided over all the sessions, so that criticism promoted a closer agreement and united men of different faiths more strongly in bonds of mutual respect and toleration. The multitudes that filled the halls at the closing session were animated with a feeling that the Parliament had not lasted long enough, that a movement had been inaugurated which was as yet only a beginning that needed further development, and that we should stay and continue the work, until the mustard-seed we were planting should become a tree under whose branches the birds of the heavens might find a dwelling-place.

The idea of holding a parliament of religions is not new. It was proposed and attempted on a smaller basis in former times by Asiatic rulers. It has been predicted and longed for by men of different races and various religions. Of European authors we may mention Volney who in his "Ruins" describes minutely how "men of every race and every region, the European in his short coat, the Asiatic in his flowing robes, the African with ebony skin, the Chinese dressed in silk, assemble in an allotted place to form a great religious congress."

It is certain that similar ideas have stirred the hearts of many. The Shinto High Priest of the Japanese State Church, the Rt. Rev. Reuchi Shibata in one

of his speeches said: "Fourteen years ago I expressed in my own country the hope that there would be a friendly meeting of the world's religionists, and now I realize my hope with great joy in being able to attend this phenomenal congress."

It is but natural that this sentiment should prevail in Japan where three religions, which closely considered are by no means compatible, exist peacefully side by side. The ancient nature worship of Shinto was not exterminated when the doctrines of Confucius were preached and accepted, and the Buddhists wage no war on either. Many families of Japan conform to the official ceremonies of Shinto; they even respect its popular superstitions, and have their children taught the precepts of the great Chinese sage as set forth in the book of rites and other sacred writings, while they themselves seek consolation for the deeper yearnings of their souls in the wisdom of Buddha. There are shrines for these three religions side by side in their homes and in their hearts.

All uncertainty as to the feasibility of the gathering vanished when the Roman Catholic Church most cordially accepted the invitation to take part. "We, as the mother of all Christian churches," said Bishop Keane, in his extemporaneous and unpublished farewell address, "have a good right to be represented. Why should we not come?" And nearly all the other denominational representatives thought as he did. Whether or not it was consistent with traditional orthodoxy, they came none the less. So powerful was the desire for a religious union, representatives of the

broadest as well as of the narrowest views met in fraternal co-operation on the same platform. You could see such an evangelist as Joseph Cook sitting by the side of liberal clergymen, such as Jenkin Lloyd Jones, of Chicago, and E. L. Rexford, of Boston. And these Christians again exchanged cordial greetings with the pagan Hindus and the atheistic Buddhists; an unprecedented spectacle!

And it was a spectacle in the literal sense of the word. In accord with American simplicity, the men of this country appeared in their every-day attire and our European guests wisely followed their example. Nevertheless, the sight was often picturesque. Cardinal Gibbons, when he delivered the prayer at the opening of the first public session, wore his official crimson robes. The prelates of the Greek Church, foremost among them the Most Rev. Dionysios Latas, Archbishop of Zante, looked very venerable in their sombre vestments and Greek cylindrical hats. The Shinto High Priest Shibata was dressed in a flowing garment of white, decorated with curious emblems, and on his head was a strangely-shaped cap wrought apparently of black jet, from the top of which nodded mysteriously a feather-like ornament of unknown significance. Pung Quang Yu, a tall and stout man, an adherent of Confucius, and the authorized representative of the Celestial Empire, appeared in Chinese dress. There were present several Buddhist bishops of Japan, in dress which varied from violet to black. The turbaned Hindu monk, Swami Vivekananda, in a long, orange gown, who, as we were informed, lived in

voluntary poverty so that as a rule he did not know where he would receive his next day's meal; Dharmapâla, the Ceylonese Buddhist, in his robe of white;—these and many more were the exceedingly interesting men who appeared upon the stage and spoke their minds freely on subjects over which in former ages cruel wars were waged. Differences not only of religious opinions but also of races were represented in the Congress. Bishop B. W. Arnet, of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, confessed that the brotherhood of man had for the first time been taken seriously. When introduced, he said, "I am to represent the African, and have been invited to give color to the Parliament of Religions." Interrupted by a storm of merriment, he continued, "But I think the Parliament is already very well colored, and if I have eyes, I think the color is this time in the majority."

The Parliament of Religions was, I repeat, a great spectacle; but it was more than that. There was a purport in it. It powerfully manifested the various religious yearnings of the human heart, and all these yearnings exhibited a longing for unity and mutual good understanding. How greatly they mistake who declare that mankind is drifting toward an irreligious future! It is true that people have become indifferent about theological subtleties, but they still remain and will remain under the sway of religion; and the churches are becoming more truly religious, as they are becoming less sectarian.

There are two kinds of Christianity. One is love and charity; it wants the truth brought out and desires

to see it practically applied in daily life. It is animated by the spirit of Jesus and tends to broaden the minds of men. The other is pervaded with exclusiveness and bigotry; it does not aspire through Christ to the truth; but takes Christ, as tradition has shaped his life and doctrines, to be the truth itself. It naturally lacks charity and hinders the spiritual growth of men. The latter kind of Christianity has always been looked upon as the orthodox and the only true Christianity. It has been fortified by Bible passages, formulated in Quicunques, indorsed by decisions of œcumenical councils and by papal bulls. Tracts privately distributed among the visitors to the Congress contained quotations such as, "Though we or an angel from heaven preach any other Gospel unto you than that we have preached unto you, let him be accursed"; and "He that believeth not shall be condemned." Without using the same harsh terms, Saint Peter expressed himself not less strongly, in a speech before the Jews concerning Jesus of Nazareth, saying: "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under the heaven given among men whereby we must be saved."

There were a few voices heard at the Parliament of Religions which breathed this narrow and so-called orthodox Christianity, but they could hardly be regarded as characterizing the spirit of the whole enterprise. They really served as a contrast by which the tolerant principles of our Oriental guests shone the more brightly. "The Hindu fanatic," said Vivekananda, "burns himself on the pyre, but he never lights the fagots of an Inquisition"; and we were told that

Buddha said to his disciples, "I forbid you to believe anything simply because I said it." Even Mohammedanism, generally supposed to be the most authoritative of all religions, appeared mild and rational as explained by Mohammed Alexander Russell Webb. Mr. Webb said: "The day of blind belief has passed away. Intelligent humanity wants a reason for every belief, and I say that that spirit is commendable and should be encouraged, and it is one of the prominent features of the spirit of Islam." At one of the meetings a prayer was offered for those blind heathen who attended the Congress, that God might have mercy on them and open their eyes, so that they would see their own errors and accept the truth of Christianity; but the prayer, made in the spirit of the old bigoted Christianity which believes in the letter and loses the spirit, found an echo neither in the hearts of our foreign guests nor among the men who had convened the Congress nor among the audience who listened to the prayer. Far from being converted, the heathen delegates took the opportunity of denouncing Christian missionaries for their supercilious attitude and for making unessential things essential. For instance, the missionaries, they said, demand that the Hindus abolish caste, and treat the refusal to eat meat as a pagan prejudice, so that in the Hindu mind "Christian" has come to mean "carnivorous." One of the delegates, a Brahman layman, said: "With the conqueror's pride they cannot bring themselves down, or rather cannot bring themselves up to practice the humility which

they preach." B. B. Nagarkar, of Bombay, expressed himself more guardedly. Said he:

"Sad will be the day for India when Christian missionaries cease to come; for we have much to learn about Christ and Christian civilisation. They do some good work. But if converts are the measures of their success, we have to say that their work is a failure. Little do you dream that your money is expended in spreading abroad nothing but Christian dogmatism, Christian bigotry, Christian pride, and Christian exclusiveness. I entreat you to expend one-tenth only of your vast sacrifices in sending out to our country unsectarian, broad missionaries who will devote their energy to educating our men and women. Educated men will understand Christ better than those whom you convert to the narrow creed of some cant Christianity."

The severest rebuke came from the lips of the representative of Jainism, and from the monk Vivekananda. The latter denounced Christian missionaries for offering stones instead of bread. They build churches, he said, and preach sectarian creeds which benefit no one. They despise the sacred traditions of the Hindu, the profundity of which they are unable to fathom; and, he added, "What shall we think of a religion whose missionaries distribute food in a famine to the starving people on the condition of conversion?"

These were hard reproaches, yet they were accepted by the Christians with good grace.* The Rev. R. G. Hume of India said, "We are willing to have our Bud-

*This passage was much commented upon in various newspapers and religious journals, and it appears that the writer's attitude has been misunderstood.

That several hard reproaches "were accepted by the Christians with good grace" is not a slight, not a rebuke, but a praise. It is very doubtful whether a Mohammedan or any other but a Christian audience would have been so patient as to listen good-naturedly to similar

dhistic and Brahman friends tell us how we can do better. Any one who will help us to be more humble and more wise will do us good and we will thank him whoever he be." And Bishop Keane, Rector of the Roman Catholic University at Washington, was not lacking in this broad religious spirit. "I endorse," said the Bishop, impressively, "the denunciation hurled against the system of pretended charity that offered food to the hungry Hindus at the cost of their conscience and their faith. It is a shame and disgrace to all who call themselves Christians. And if Vivekananda by his criticism can only stir us and sting us into better teachings and better doings in the great work of

censures. Forbearance is always a symptom of strength. None but the strong can afford to be generous and tolerant.

Among the comments that came to our notice the *National Baptist* of November 23 discusses Vivekananda's statement under the caption, "A False Accusation." Dr. S. W. Duncan writes: "I hope Bishop Keane's denunciation was honest and not a covert fling at Protestants. . . . I suspect if the Hindu monk had told the whole truth, all he knew, he would have been compelled to mention by name Roman Catholics. Dr. Bunker has recently given me instances of his being frustrated in his work by Catholic priests preceding him in heathen villages, and buying up the chiefs, giving them money and other considerations of weight with heathen, for their acceptance of crucifixes and Romish rites and enrollment as Catholics. I have made inquiry, and there is not on record a single intimation that any one of our missionaries has ever thus abused his holy calling."

We have a good opinion of Baptist missions, and know at the same time that Roman Catholic missionaries, among them the much-reviled Jesuits, have shown an admirable devotion to the cause of their religion.

Supposing Vivekananda's accusation to be true of some Christian missionaries, we do not take it to mean a wholesale condemnation of all. Nor do we wish to pour cold water upon the missionary zeal. The missionary spirit is the index of the spiritual life of a religion, and we are glad to see it in Buddhists not less than in Christians. But we are sorry that the broad religious spirit which pervaded the Parliament and is present among the Unitarians and other liberal institutions, is too weak to undertake any great propaganda for their cause. How much more effective would Christian missionaries be if they taught religion instead of dogmas, and love of truth instead of blind faith.

The Louisville Record of November 30 calls Vivekananda's statement slander, and adds: "When will we get over the harm done by the World's Parliament of Religions?" This reminds us of the parable of the sower, where Christ says: "Some [seeds] fell upon stony ground."

Christ, I for one shall be profoundly grateful to our friend the great Hindu monk."

This is the true catholicity of the religion of mankind, and coming from the lips of a Roman Catholic bishop, it did not fail to find a joyous and powerful response in the audience. To the honor of our Hindu friends we have to add that the fairness and impartial love of justice with which their remarks were accepted by a Christian audience, as well as by their Christian brethren on the platform, were unhesitatingly recognized. Said one of them, "The tolerance, the kindliness, nay, the patience with which you listen to the enumeration of your faults, this sympathy with the wrong done to heathendom by Christianity, makes me believe that we have all advanced and are advancing wonderfully."

Heretofore, the broad Christianity has always been regarded as heretical; but as this Parliament proves, times have changed. Judging from what we witnessed at Chicago, the official representatives of almost all religions speak a new language. The narrowness of past ages is now felt to be due to imperfect views of the truth, and we recognize the duty to pass beyond it to a higher and grander conception. There are still representatives of the narrow spirit left, but their position becomes more and more untenable. What does it matter that previous ecumenical councils did not stand upon a broad platform? Does not religion grow? Was the present Parliament of Religions not ecumenical? And has the holy spirit of religious progress ceased to be a presence in mankind? If ever any council was

ecumenical, it was this gathering at Chicago; and although no resolutions were passed, there were a certain harmony in matters of faith and a consciousness of that which is essential, such as were never manifested before.

The narrow Christianity will disappear, for its errors have become palpable. There are still remaining some prophets of the trust in a blind faith, but their influence is on the wane. Liberals are inclined to suspect the motives of the believers in the letter, but they judge without charity. The narrow-minded Christian dogmatists are neither false nor hypocritical, for we have ample evidence of their earnestness and their simple-minded piety. Yet they are mistaken. They are deficient in insight and they lack in understanding. We shall have to educate them and teach them that the gentle spirit of Christ is not with them, but marches on with the progressive part of mankind to the planes of a higher evolution.

We all of us have learned much during these congresses. Our foreign guests have learned to know Christianity better than it appeared to them in the conduct of Christians and in sermons and Sunday-schools, and we in turn have learned to respect not only the love of truth and earnestness of pagans, but also their philosophical capacity.

The narrow Christianity was represented by a few speakers and the audience endured them with great patience; but we can fairly ignore them here; for there is no need of reviewing or recapitulating sermons which every one who desires can enjoy in our various ortho-

dox churches. Dr. Briggs represented progressive theology and insisted that religion must face the criticism of science. The Rev. Mr. Mozoomdar is the leader of a similar movement in India. The Brahmo Somaj, which he and the able Secretary of the Association, Mr. B. B. Nagarkar of Bombay, represented, may be characterized as Hindu Unitarianism. Max Müller and Henry Drummond sent brief papers which showed the warm sympathy of the authors and their substantial agreement with the spirit of the Parliament of Religions.

It is impossible to analyze the details of the various views presented; but a few quotations from the speeches of our heathen friends whom we had not the pleasure of meeting before, will not be out of place.

Vivekananda explained the central idea of the Vedas as follows:

"I humbly beg to differ from those who see in monotheism, in the recognition of a personal God apart from nature, the acme of intellectual development. I believe it is only a kind of anthropomorphism which the human mind stumbles upon in its first efforts to understand the unknown. The ultimate satisfaction of human reason and emotion lies in the realization of that universal essence which is the All. And I hold an irrefragable evidence that this idea is present in the Veda, the numerous gods and their invocations notwithstanding. This idea of the formless All, the Sat, i. e., *esse*, or Being called Atman and Brahman in the Upanishads, and further explained in the Darsanas, is the central idea of the Veda, nay, the root idea of the Hindu religion in general."

On another occasion the same speaker dwelt on the idea of this panentheism with reference to the soul. Though recognizing law in the world, he repudiated

materialism. The soul has tendencies, he said, and these tendencies have been caused by past actions in former incarnations. Science explains everything by habits, and habits are acquired by repetition. That we do not remember the acts done in our previous states of existence is due to the fact that consciousness is the surface only of the mental ocean, and our past experiences are stored in its depths. The wheel of causation rushes on, crushing everything in its way, and waits not for the widow's tear or the orphan's cry. Yet there is consolation and hope in the idea that the soul is immortal and we are children of eternal bliss. The Hindu refuses to call men sinners; he calls them "children of immortal bliss." Death means only a change of center from one body to another. He continued:

"The Vedas proclaim, not a dreadful combination of unforgiving laws, not an endless prison of cause and effect, but that, at the head of all these laws, in and through every particle of matter and force, stands One through whose command the wind blows, the fire burns, the clouds rain, and death stalks upon the earth. And what is his nature? He is everywhere, the pure and formless one, the Almighty and the All-merciful. 'Thou art our Father, thou art our mother, thou art our beloved friend, thou art the source of all strength. Thou art He that beareth the burdens of the universe; help me bear the little burden of this life.' Thus sang the Rishis of the Veda. And how to worship him? Through love. 'He is to be worshipped as the one beloved, dearer than everything in this and in the next life.'"

The breadth of Vivekananda's religious views appeared when he said:

"The same light shines through all colors, and in the heart

of everything the same truth reigns. The Lord has declared to the Hindu in his incarnation as Krishna, 'I am in every religion, as the thread through a string of pearls, and wherever thou seest extraordinary holiness and extraordinary power raising and purifying humanity know ye that I am there.' "

Parseeism, the noble religion of Zarathustra, received scholarly treatment by Jinanji Jamshedji Modi who repudiated its dualism and represented it as pure monotheism, while he satisfactorily explained the symbolism of the sacred fire. In this way almost every religion was raised to a higher standpoint, than it is usually understood to have, by its representatives, and even idolatry found adroit champions in the Congress.

Said Vivekananda:

"It may be said without the least fear of contradiction that no Indian idolator, as such, believes the piece of stone, metal, or wood before his eyes to be his god in any sense of the word. He takes it only as a symbol of the all-pervading Godhood, and uses it as a convenient object for purposes of concentration, which being accomplished, he does not hesitate to throw it away."

Prince Momolu Massaquoi, son of a native king from the Wey Territory of the West Coast of Africa, a fine-looking youth of good education, which he had received in an American college after his conversion to Christianity, spoke in the same way as Vivekananda concerning the idolatry of African natives.

Mohammedanism, in addition to its representation by Moslems, was critically reviewed by the Rev. George Washburn, President of Robert College, Constantinople, who showed its points of contact and disagreement with Christianity. He quoted passages from the

Koran which, in contrast to Mr. Webb's exposition, prove the exclusiveness of Mohammed's religion. The third sura, for instance, declares:

"Whoever followeth any other religion than Islam, shall not be accepted, and at the last day he shall be of those that perish!"

Dr. Washburn's quotation from the Koran reminds us of similar passages in the New Testament; the old orthodoxy of the Moslems, however, is giving way to broader views. *Tout comme chez nous!* Dr. Washburn quoted the following Mohammedan hymn, composed by Shereef Hanoom, a Turkish lady of Constantinople, and translated by the Rev. H. O. Dwight, which reminds us strongly of our best modern Christian poetry:

"O source of kindness and of love,
O give us aid or hopes above,
'Mid grief and guilt although I grope,
From thee I'll ne'er cut off my hope,
My Lord, O my Lord!

"Thou King of Kings, dost know my need,
Thy pardoning grace, no bars can heed;
Thou lov'st to help the helpless one
And bid'st his cries of fear be gone,
My Lord, O my Lord!

"Shouldst thou refuse to still my fears,
Who else will stop to dry my tears?
For I am guilty, guilty still,
No other one has done so ill,
My Lord, O my Lord!

"The lost in torment stand aghast,
To see this rebel's sins so vast;
What wonder, then, that Shereef cries
For mercy, mercy, ere she dies,
My Lord, O my Lord!"

Prof. Minas Tchéraz, an Armenian Christian, when sketching the history of the Armenian Church, said sarcastically that real Mohammedanism was quite different from the Islam represented by Mr. Webb. This may be true, but Mr. Webb might return the compliment and say that true Christianity as it showed itself in deeds such as the Crusades, is quite different from that ideal which its admirers claim it to be. Similar objections, that the policy of Christian nations showed very little the love and meekness of Jesus, were indeed made by Mr. Hirai, a Buddhist of Japan. We Christians have reason enough to be charitable in judging others.

Buddhism was strongly represented by delegates from Ceylon, Siam, and Japan. H. R. H. Chandradat Chudhadharn, Prince of Siam, sent a paper which contained a brief exposition of Buddhistic principles. There are four noble truths according to Buddha. These are (1) the existence of suffering; (2) the recognition of ignorance as the cause of suffering; (3) the extinction of suffering by the cessation of the three kinds of lust arising from ignorance; and (4) the eight paths that lead to the cessation of lust. These eight paths constitute the way of salvation and are (1) right understanding; (2) right resolutions; (3) right speech; (4) right acts; (5) right way of earning a livelihood; (6) right efforts; (7) right meditation; and (8) the right state of the mind. The Japanese Buddhists are men of philosophical depth and genius, and might have made a deeper impression than they did if they had been more familiar with Western thought.

They left, however, behind them a number of pamphlets for free distribution by the Bukkyo Gakkuwai, a society at Tokio whose sole purpose is the propagation of Buddhism.* The missionary zeal of the Japanese Buddhists shows that there is life in Buddhism. The Rt. Rev. Ashitsu concluded his article on the teachings of Buddha with the following words:

"You know very well that our sunrise island of Japan is noted for its beautiful cherry-tree flowers. But you do not know that our country is also the kingdom where the flowers of truth are blooming in great beauty and profusion at all seasons. Visit Japan, and do not forget to take home with you the truth of Buddhism. All hail the glorious spiritual spring-day, when the song and odor of truth invite you all out to our country for the search of holy paradise!"

One quotation from the Japanese missionary tracts will suffice to prove that the ancient teachings of Gautama are still preserved among his adherents of the present generation of Japan. In "The Sutra of Forty-two Sections" we read on page 3:

"Buddha said: If a man foolishly does me wrong, I will return to him the protection of my ungrudging love. The more evil comes from him, the more good shall go from me. The fragrance of goodness always comes to me, and the harmful air of evil goes to him. . . .

* These are the titles of the Japanese missionary tracts in my possession: *Outlines of the Mahayana as taught by Buddha,* by S. Kuroda, Superintendent of Education of the Jôdo-Sect; *The Sutra of Forty-two Sections and Two Other Short Sutras,* translated from the Chinese originals (The Buddhist Propagation Society: Kyoto, Japan, 1892); *A Shin-Shiu Catechism,* by S. Kato of the Hongwanjiha of the Shin-Shiu sect of Japan (The Buddhist Propagation Society, Kyoto, Japan, 1893); *The Skeleton of a Philosophy of Religion,* by the Rev. Prof. M. Tokunaga, translated by Zenshiro Noguchi (Tokio, Kawai Bunkodo & Co., 1893); *Outlines of the Doctrine of the Nichiren Sect,* by Nissatsu Arai, the lately lamented Dai-sôjô. With the life of Nichiren, the founder of the Nichiren Sect, edited by the Central Office of the Nichiren Sect, Tokio, Japan, A. D. 1893.

"Buddha said: A wicked man who reproaches a virtuous one is like one who looks up and spits at heaven; the spittle soils not the heaven, but comes back and defiles his own person. So again, he is like one who flings dust at another when the wind is contrary, the dust will return to him who threw it. The virtuous man cannot be hurt, and the misery that the other would inflict falls back on himself."

The Parliament of Religions is undoubtedly the most noteworthy event of modern times. What are the World's Fair and its magnificent splendor in comparison with it? Or what the German Army Bill, the Irish Home Rule Bill in England and its drastic episodes in the House of Parliament, or a change of party in the United States? It is evident that from its date we shall have to begin a new era in the evolution of man's religious life.

It is difficult to understand the pentecost of Christianity which took place after the departure of Christ from his disciples. But this Parliament of Religions was analogous in many respects, and it may give us an idea of what happened in Jerusalem nearly two thousand years ago. A holy intoxication overcame the speakers as well as the audience; and no one can conceive how impressive the whole proceeding was, unless he himself saw the eager faces of the people and imbibed the enthusiasm that enraptured the multitudes.

Any one who attended these congresses must have felt the thrill of the divine spirit that was moving through the minds of the congregation. We may rest assured that the event is greater than its promoters ever dreamed of. They builded better than they knew. How small are we mortal men who took an active part

in the Parliament in comparison with the movement which is inaugurated! And this movement indicates the extinction of the old narrowness and the beginning of a new era of broader and higher religious life.

It is proposed that another Parliament of Religions* be convened in the year 1900 at the ancient city of Bombay, where we may find a spiritual contrast between the youngest city and the oldest, and pay a tribute from the daughter to the mother. Other appropriate places for Religious Parliaments would be Jerusalem, the Holy City of three great religions, or some port of Japan where Shintoism, Confucianism, Buddhism, and Christianity peacefully develop side by side, exhibiting conditions which invite a comparison fair to all.

Whether or not the Parliament of Religions be repeated, whether or not its work will be continued, the fact remains that this congress at Chicago will exert a lasting influence upon the religious intelligence of mankind. It has stirred the spirits, stimulated mental growth, and given direction to man's further evolution. It is by no means an agnostic movement, for it is carried on the wings of a religious faith and positive certainty. It is decidedly a child of the old religions, and Chrstianity is undoubtedly still the leading star. That the faults of Christianity have been

*It may be well to add that for reasons which need not be explained here, all attempts to continue the Parliament of Religions were failures. Under Mr. Bonney's direction a local committee tried to keep up a propaganda under the name of the World's Religious Parliament Extension, but its work found no response and was practically futile.

more severely rebuked than those of any other religion should not be interpreted to mean that the others are in every respect better, for the censure is but a sign that points to the purification of Christianity. The dross is discarded, but the gold will remain.

The religion of the future, as the opinions presented indicate, will be that religion which can rid itself of all narrowness, of all demand for blind subordination, of the sectarian spirit, and of the Phariseeism which takes it for granted that its own devotees alone are good and holy, while the virtues of others are but polished vices. The religion of the future cannot be a creed upon which the scientist must turn his back, because it is irreconcilable with the principles of science. Religion must be in perfect accord with science; for science—and I mean here not the private opinions and hypotheses of single scientists—is not an enterprise of human frailty. Science is divine, and the truth of science is a revelation of God. Through science God speaks to us; by science he shows us the glory of his works; and in science he teaches us his will.

"We love science," said a Catholic priest, of Paris, at one of the sessions in the scientific section, when protesting against a thoughtless remark of a speaker who broadly accused the clergy of being opposed to science. "We love science," Father D'Arby said, emphatically; "the office of science in religion is to prune it of fantastic outgrowths. Without science religion would become superstition."

The human soul consists of two elements, self and truth. Self is the egotistical desire of being some in-

dependent little deity, and truth is the religious longing for making our soul a dwelling-place of God. The existence of self is an illusion; and there is no wrong in this world, no vice, no sin except what flows from the assertion of self. Truth has a wonderful peculiarity; it is inexhaustible, and it, likewise, demands a constantly renewed application. An increase of knowledge involves always an increase of problems that entice the inquiring mind to penetrate deeper and deeper into the mysteries of being, and however serious and truth-loving we may have been, there is always occasion to be more faithful in the attendance to our obligations and daily duties. Self shrivels our hearts; truth makes them expand; and the ultimate aim of religion is to eliminate self and let man become an embodiment of truth, an incarnation of God.

We must welcome the light from whatever source it comes, and we must hail the truth wherever we find it. There is but one religion, the religion of truth. There is but one piety, it is the love of truth. There is but one morality, it is the earnest desire of leading a life of truth. And the religion of the future can only be the Religion of Truth.

SCIENCE A RELIGIOUS REVELATION.*

A FRENCH author of great repute has written a book entitled *L'irreligion de l'avenir,* "The Irreligion of the Future," in which he declares that religion will eventually disappear; and he whose opinion is swayed by the diligent researches of such historians as Buckle and Lecky will very likely endorse this prediction. Theological questions which formerly occupied the very centre of interest now lie entirely neglected, and have ceased to be living problems. Who cares to-day whether God the Son should be called ὅμοιος or ὁμοιοούσιος, alike or similar to God the Father? What government would now wage a war for the interpretation of a Bible passage? No schism will ever again arise over the question whether τοῦτ' ἔστιν means "this is my body," or "this represents my body!"

It is quite true, as Buckle and Lecky assert, that theological questions, or rather the theological questions of past ages, have disappeared, but it is not true that religion has ceased to be a factor in the evolution of mankind. On the contrary, religion has so penetrated our life that we have ceased to notice it as an

*Address delivered Sept. 19, 1893, before the World's Congress of Religion at Chicago, Illinois.

independent power. It surrounds us like the air we breathe and we are no longer aware of it.

It was quite possible for our forefathers to preach the religion of love and at the same time to massacre in ruthless cruelty enemies who in righteous struggle defended their own homes and tried to preserve their separate nationality. Our moral fiber has become more sensitive: we now resent the injustice of our own people, although we no longer call love of justice religious, but humane or ethical.

The famous blue laws that imposed penalties on those who did not attend church have become obsolete. We no longer burn infidels and dissenters, for we have become extremely heretical ourselves; that is to say, our most orthodox clergymen would in the days of our forefathers have appeared as infidels, and every one of us, if he had spoken his mind freely, might have been condemned to the stake, for all of us have adopted, more or less, the results of scientific inquiry. Truly religious men now believe in such things as the Copernican system and evolution, which when first proposed were deemed heretical and dangerous. These theories have not, however, destroyed religion, as the clergy predicted, but only certain theological interpretations erroneously identified with religion. Our religious views have not lost, but gained in depth and importance. Those scientific innovations, which were regarded as irreligious, have become truly religious facts; they have broadened our minds and deepened our religious sympathies. Our religious horizon, which in the time of Samuel was limited to

Palestine, and in the Middle Ages mainly to Europe, has been extended over the whole cosmos. Judaism, the national religion of the Israelites, became human, and the humanitarianism of Christianity became cosmical. Sacrifices of goats and lambs have been abolished, and by and by we shall have to give up all the other paganism that attaches to some of our religious views and institutions. But religion itself will remain forever. That which appears to men like Buckle, Lecky, and Guyau as a progress to an irreligious age is an advance to a purer conception of religion; it is a gradual deliverance from error and a nearer approach to truth.

Religion is indestructible, because it is that innermost conviction of man which regulates his conduct. Religion gives us the bread of life. As long as men cannot live without morality, so long religion will be needful to mankind.

Some people regard this view of religion as too broad; they say religion is the belief in God; and I have no objection to their definition provided we agree concerning the words *belief* and *God*. God is to me not what he is according to the old dogmatic view, a supernatural person. God is to me, as he always has been to the mass of mankind, an idea of moral import. God is the authority of the moral ought. Science may come and prove that God can be no person, but it cannot deny that there is a power in this world which under penalty of perdition enforces a certain conduct. To conceive God as a person is a simile, and to think of him as a father is an allegory. The simile is appropri-

ate, and the allegory is beautiful; but we must not forget that parables, although they embody the truth, are not the truth. The fact is, God is not a person like ourselves; he is not a father nor a mother like our progenitors; he is only comparable to a father; but in truth he is much more than that; he is not personal, but superpersonal. He is not a great man, he is God. He is the life of our life, he is the power that sustains the universe, he is the law that permeates all; he is the curse of sin and the blessing of righteousness; he is the unity of being; he is love; he is the possibility of science, and the truth of knowledge: he is light; he is the reality of existence in which we live and move and have our being; he is life and the condition of life, morality. To comprehend all in a word, he is the authority of conduct.

Such is the God of science, and belief in God must not mean that we regard as true whatever the Scriptures or later traditions tell us concerning him. Belief must mean the same as its original Greek πίστις which would be better translated by trust or faithfulness. It must mean the same as its corresponding Hebrew word *ammunah,* which is derived from the verb *aman* to be steady. *Ammunah,* generally translated "belief" means firmness of character. Belief in God must be an unswerving obedience to the moral law.

Science, i. e., genuine science, is not an undertaking of human frailty. Science is divine; science is a revelation of God. Through science God communicates with us. In science he speaks to us. Science

gives us information concerning the truth; and the truth reveals his will.

It is true that the hieroglyphics of science are not easy to decipher and they sometimes seem to overthrow the very foundations of morality, as it appeared, for instance, to Professor Huxley. But such mistakes must be expected; they are natural and should not agitate us nor shake our confidence in the reliability of science. Reason is the divine spark in man's nature, and science, which is a methodical application of man's reason, affords us the ultimate criterion of truth. Surrender science and you rob man of his divinity, his self-reliance, his child-relation to God; you make of him the son of the bondwoman and the slave of tradition, to inquire into the truth of which he who allows his judgment to be taken captive has forfeited the right. By surrendering science you degrade man; you cut him off from the only reliable communication with God, and thus change religion into superstition.

There are devotees of religion who despise science and object to its influence in the sphere of religion. They not only deny that science is a revelation, but they also claim that religion has a peculiar revelation of her own. Religion, they say, has been revealed once; this special revelation must be blindly accepted; and no criticism of it should be tolerated.

Men of this type are as a rule very pious, faithful, and well-meaning, but they are narrow-minded and without judgment. While all life on earth is growth, their religious ideal is a fossil. To be and remain stationary is with them a matter of principle. They are

blind to the facts that religion, too, has to develop; that intellectual and moral growth is an indispensable condition of its life and health; and that science, far from being its enemy, is its sister and co-worker. Science will help religion to find the true path of progress.

Some of the schoolmen who were, or tried to be, orthodox theologians and philosophers at the same time, carried the consequences of this dualism to the extreme, and made a distinction between religious truth and scientific truth, declaring that a proposition might be true in religion which is utterly false in philosophy, and *vice versa*. This view is not only logically untenable, but it is also morally frivolous; it is irreligious.

What is truth?

Truth is the congruence of an idea and the fact expressed in it. It is a correct statement of that which the statement represents. Thomas Aquinas defines it as *adaequatio intellectus et rei*.

What is scientific truth?

A statement may be true, yet may be vaguely or awkwardly expressed; it may have an admixture of error, it may be misleading; one man might understand it right, while another might not. Again, a statement may be true and well formulated, yet he who makes it cannot prove it. It may rest upon hypothesis and be a mere assumption arrived at by a happy guess. All such truths are imperfect. They are not scientific. Scientific truths are such statements as are proved by undeniable evidence or by experi-

ments and formulated in exact and unequivocal terms.

What is religious truth?

By religious truth we understand all such reliable statements of fact or doctrines, be they perfect or imperfect, as have a direct bearing upon our moral conduct. Statements of fact, the application of which can be formulated in such rules as, "Thou shalt not lie," "Thou shalt not steal," "Thou shalt not envy nor hate," are religious.

Scientific truths and moral truths, accordingly, are not separate and distinct spheres. A truth becomes scientific by its form and method of statement, but it is religious by its substance or content. There may be truths which are religious yet lack the characteristics that would render them scientific, and others that are religious and scientific at the same time. But certainly, there is no discrepancy between religious and scientific truth. There are not two kinds of truth, one religious and the other scientific. There is no conflict possible between them. The scholastic maxim, that a statement may be perfectly true in religion and false in philosophy, and *vice versa,* is wrong.

The nature of religious truth is the same as that of scientific truth. There is but one truth. There cannot be two truths in conflict with one another. Contradiction is always, in religion not less than in science, a sign that there is somewhere an error. There cannot be in religion any other method of ascertaining the truth than the method found in science. And if we renounce reason and science, we can have no ultimate criterion of truth.

The dignity of man, his sonship, consists in his ability to ascertain, and know, the truth. Reason is that which makes man the image of God, and science is the exercise of the noblest human faculty.

* * *

In former ages, religion has often found truths by instinct, as it were, and boldly stated their practical applications, while the science of the time was not sufficiently advanced to prove them. The religious instinct anticipated the most important moral truths, before a rational argumentation could lead to their recognition. This instinctive or intuitive apprehension of truth has always distinguished our great religious prophets. Their statements were, with rare exceptions, neither founded upon scientific investigation nor formulated with any attempt at precision. Their exhortations were more oratorical than logical, adapted to popular comprehension, and abounding in figures of speech.

Almost all religions have drawn upon that wondrous resource of human insight, inspiration, which reveals a truth not in a systematic and scientific way but at a glance, as it were, and by divination. The religious instinct of man taught our forefathers some of the most important moral truths, which, with the limited wisdom of their age, they never could have known by other means.

Science has done much of late, especially since Darwin, to explain instinct in the animal world. Instinct is an amazing faculty, prodigious and life-pre-

serving, and it plays an important part also in the evolution of mankind.

In almost all practical fields men, through a fortunate combination of circumstances aided by imagination, made important inventions which they were unable to understand. Their achievements were frequently in advance of their knowledge.

Prof. Ernst Mach says in his excellent book, *The Science of Mechanics:*

"An *instinctive,* irreflective knowledge of the processes of nature will doubtless always precede the scientific, conscious apprehension, or *investigation,* of phenomena. The former is the outcome of the relation in which the processes of nature stand to the satisfaction of our wants. The acquisition of the most elementary truth does not devolve upon the individual alone: it is pre-effected in the development of the race.

"In point of fact, it is necessary to make a distinction between mechanical experience and mechanical science, in the sense in which the latter term is at present employed. Mechanical experiences are, unquestionably, very old. If we carefully examine the ancient Egyptian and Assyrian monuments, we shall find there pictorial representations of many kinds of implements and mechanical contrivances; but accounts of the scientific knowledge of these peoples are either totally lacking, or point conclusively to a very inferior grade of attainment. By the side of highly ingenious appliances, we behold the crudest and roughest expedients employed—as the use of sleds, for instance, for the transportation of enormous blocks of stone. All bears an instinctive, unperfected, accidental character.

"So, too, prehistoric graves contain implements, whose construction and employment imply no little skill and much mechanical experience. Thus, long before theory was dreamed of, implements, machines, mechanical experiences, and mechanical knowledge were abundant."

The instinctive wisdom of man is remarkable. This is true not only in its relation to liberal arts and manufactures, but also in the regulation of the moral life of man. Centuries before Christ, when ethics as a science was as yet unknown, the sages of Asia taught men to love their enemies.* The preachings of Christ appeared to his contemporaries as impractical and visionary, while only recently we have learned to understand that the fundamental commands of religious morality are the only correct applications to be derived from the psychical and social laws of human life. Spinoza was the first among European philosophers to prove by logical arguments that hatred can be conquered by love only.

As the instinctive inventions of prehistoric ages show "by the side of highly ingenious appliances the crudest and roughest expedients," so our religions, too, often exhibit by the side of the loftiest morality a most lamentable lack of insight into the nature of ethical truth. Take, for instance, Jehovah's direct and undisguised command, given by Moses to the children of Israel, to steal gold and silver vessels from the Egyptians. Or take Jael's treacherous murder of Sisera, an infamous deed, excusable only as being in consonance with the general barbarity of the age, yet it is highly praised in song by Deborah and declared worthy of imitation.†

* We quote one instance only selected from the Dhammapada, one of the most ancient books of the Buddhist canon: "Hatred does not cease by hatred at any time: hatred ceases by love, this is an old rule."—Sacred Books of the East, Vol. X, p. 5.

† Judges iv., 18-21.

We admire St. Paul in many respects, but we must say that his view of marriage is un-Christian; it is unworthy of his sacred office as an apostle; it is a blemish on our Bible; it is irreligious and should have no place in religion.

Who is orthodox enough still to defend such imperfections and shortcomings in our otherwise sacred traditions? Who would shut out from them the light of a rational and scientific inquiry, so as to preserve the blemishes of religion together with its noble sentiments?

A scientist, like Ernst Mach from whom we have quoted above the passage on the evolution of mechanics, knows that the science of mechanics does not come to destroy the mechanical inventions of the past, but that on the contrary, it will make them more available. In the same way a scientific insight into religious truth does not come to destroy religion; it will purify and broaden it.

* * *

The dislike of religious men to accept lessons from science is natural and excusable. Whenever a great religious teacher has risen, leaving a deep impression upon the minds of those around him, we find his disciples anxious to preserve inviolate not only his spirit, but even the very words of his doctrines. Such reverence is good, but it must not be carried to the extreme of placing tradition above the authority of truth. Religious zeal must never become sectarian, so as to see no other salvation than in one particular form of religion. The great prophets of mankind, such

men as Zarathustra, Confucius, Buddha, Socrates, Moses, and, foremost among them, He who wore the thorny crown and died on the cross, are distinguished by breadth and catholicity.

We read in the eleventh chapter of Numbers, 27-29:

"And there ran a young man, and told Moses, and said, Eldad and Medad do prophesy in the camp.

"And Joshua, the son of Nun, the servant of Moses, one of his young men, answered and said, My lord Moses, forbid them.

"And Moses said unto him, Enviest thou for my sake? would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his spirit upon them!"

Our great religious leaders are decidedly broader than their disciples. The apostle St. John showed a love for his great master, Jesus of Nazareth, like that shown by Joshua for Moses, and also the same lack of discretion when he reprimanded the man who cast out devils in the name of Christ. John forbade him, but Christ did not approve of the well-intentioned zeal of his most beloved disciple and said:

"Forbid him not! . . . .

"For he that is not against us is on our part."—Mark ix, 39-40.

The spirit of Joshua and John, prompting them to forbid others to teach or prophesy except by the special permission of their masters, has produced that sectarian attitude of our religions which detracts so much from their catholicity, establishing the authority of tradition as the highest court of appeal in questions of religious faith and truth.

Reverence for our master makes us easily forgetful

of our highest duty, reverence for an impartial recognition of the truth. The antipathy of a certain class of religious men toward science, although natural and excusable, should nevertheless be recognized as a grievous fault; it is a moral error and an irreligious attitude.

* * *

I have myself suffered from the misapplication of religious conservatism, and I know whereof I speak. I have experienced in my heart, as a faithful believer, all the curses of infidelity and felt the burning flames of damnation.

Our religious mythology is so thoroughly identified with religion itself, that when the former is recognized as erroneous, the latter also will unavoidably collapse. A man is commanded to accept and believe the very letter of our codified dogmas or be lost forever.

You who preach such a religion, can you fathom the tortures of a faithful and God-loving soul, when confronted with ample scientific evidence of the untruth of his religious convictions? A man who could imagine no higher bliss than to die for his religion and in the performance of his duties, who loves his God and is anxious to believe in him, to rely on him, to trust in him, feels himself dragged down into the pit of unbelief. Do you think the voice of science can be hushed? Science may be regarded for a long time as a temptation; but it is too powerful, too convincing, and too divine to be conquered. Wherever there is a soul distorted by a conflict between religious faith and scientific insight, the latter will, in the long run, always be

victorious. And what a downfall of our noblest hopes must ensue! The highest ideals have become illusions; the purpose of life is gone, and desolation rules supreme.

When a faithful Christian turns infidel, it is an act, the boldness and significance of which cannot be overrated. The man himself is too much occupied with the anxieties of his own troubled mind to judge himself whether it will lead him to hell or by the road of evolution heavenward, to higher goals. He is in the predicament of Faust when he dared to make the pact with the Devil. Titan-like, he decides to brave the storm and to challenge the powers that shape his fate. Faust, when cursing Hope, Faith, and Patience, is conscious of the situation which is characterized in these lines:

"Woe, woe!
Thou hast it destroyed,
The beautiful world,
With powerful fist:
In ruin 'tis hurled,
By the blow of a demigod shattered!
The scattered
Fragments into the Void we carry,
Deploring
The Beauty perished beyond restoring.
Mightier
For the children of men,
Brightlier
Build it again,
In thine own bosom build it anew!
Bid the new career
Commence

With clearer sense,
And the new songs of cheer
Be sung thereto!"

When a faithful Christian turns infidel, the world in which he lived breaks down. He sees the errors which form its foundation-stones, and he hastens to destroy the whole structure. Depict in your mind the earnestness, the severity, and the terror of the situation, and you will no longer think that the bitterness of infidels is an evidence of their irreligious spirit; irreligious acrimony is the expression of disappointment and indicates very frequently a deep religious sentiment, which unfortunate circumstances have curdled and turned sour. Therefore, do not look upon the rabid Freethinkers as enemies of religion. Learn to regard them as your brethren who have passed into a phase of the religious development which may be necessary to their higher evolution. They have recognized, in their search for truth, that the old dogmatism of religion is found wanting, but they are as yet unable to build up again another and a better world in place of the one they have destroyed.

The destruction of dogmatism appears as a wreck of religion itself, but, in fact, it is a religious advance. Says Tobit in his prayer:

"God leadeth down to hell and bringeth up again."—Tobit, xiii, 2.

We must pass through all the despair of infidelity and of a religious emptiness before we can learn to appreciate the glory and grandeur of a higher stage of religious evolution.

When infidelity is the result of a sincere love of truth, do not look upon it as irreligious. Any one who dares to have views of his own and is honest in his convictions is a religious man. And the Proverbs say: "God layeth up sound wisdom for the upright." He who is sincere, will, even when erring, find in the end the right way.

Bear in mind that all truth is sacred and you have the clue to a reconciliation of the conflict between science and religion. There is a holiness and a truly religious import about science which has not yet been sufficiently recognized, either by the clergy or by scientists.

Science, it is true, comes to destroy the old dogmatism, it discredits blind faith, and rejects the trust in the letter. But he who sees deeper will soon perceive that no harm is done, for science preserves the spirit of religion; it enhances truth.

We all know that religious truths are expressed in allegories; Christ spoke in parables and St. Paul says in his first epistle to the Corinthians (iii, 2):

"I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able."

If Paul were among us to-day, would he still say, "Neither yet now are you able?"

And to the Hebrews he writes (v, 12):

"For every one that uses milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe."

Is there any doubt that all our dogmas are truths figuratively expressed? Why should we not take the consequences of this truth? Very few, indeed, do

take them; for we have become so accustomed to parables that our so-called orthodox believers denounce as heretics those who do not believe them *verbatim.*

A religious truth symbolically expressed is called mythology, and he who accepts the mythology of his religion not as a parable filled with meaning but as the truth itself, is a pagan. Now we make bold to say, that no conflict is possible between genuine science and true religion. What appears as such is a conflict between science and paganism.

Religious parables, if taken in their literal meaning, will somehow always be found irrational. Says an old Roman proverb, *Omne simile claudicat,* every comparison limps; it is somewhere faulty. Why should religious similes be exceptions?

Let us not forget that our religious preachings and teachings are a mere stammering of the truth. They show us the truth as through a glass, darkly. The traditional expressions of religious aspirations are based more upon the intuitional instinct of the prophets of former ages than upon a rational and scientific insight. The former is good, but it should not exclude the latter. The assuredness of our religious sentiments must not tyrannize over or suppress our scientific abilities.

* * *

Man's reason and scientific acumen are comparable to the eyes of his body, while his religious sentiments are like the sense of touch. The simplicity and immediateness of our feelings of touch do not make it advisable to dispense with sight.

There are religious teachers who advise us to rely entirely upon our religious feelings and distrust the eyesight of science. O blind leader of the blind, knowest thou not that if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness? The snail that creeps on the ground may from necessity be obliged to rely alone on its sense of touch in its feelers, but man with his higher possibilities and in his more complicated existence needs his eyes and cannot make firm steps without them. Ye adversaries of free inquiry are like the blind man who groping about finds an even and smooth path which, he feels assured, is the highroad that leads him home. Having no eyes to see he is not aware that he is walking on a railway embankment and that the train is already approaching that will complete the tragedy of his fate.

That conception of religion which rejects science is inevitably doomed. It cannot survive and is destined to disappear with the progress of civilization. Nevertheless, religion will not go. Religion will abide. Humanity will never be without religion; for religion is the basis of morals, and man could not exist without morals. Man has become man only through his obedience to the moral law. Every neglect of the moral law lowers him; every moral progress raises him. And who in the face of facts will say that the authority of moral conduct is not a reality in the world, that God in the sense that science understands his nature and being does not exist, and that religion, the religion of scientific truth, is error?

Religion will undergo changes, but it can not dis-

appear; while it will free itself of its paganism, it will evolve and grow. Religion may even lose its name, for the old reactionary dogmatists may continue to identify religion with their erroneous conceptions of religion; and they may succeed in impressing this view upon mankind. Yet the substance of religion will nevertheless remain, for it is the soul of all the aspirations of mankind; it is our holiest convictions applied to practical life.

Religion is as indestructible as science; for science is the method of searching for the truth, and religion is the enthusiasm and goodwill to live a life of truth.

THE NEW ORTHODOXY

ORTHODOXY is the confidence that a certain proposition is right and that all other propositions which contradict it are wrong. Accordingly, orthodoxy, or rightness of opinion, is the natural aim of both science and religion, and what we need most in our churches, schools, and universities is genuine orthodoxy. But how shall we obtain it? Is not orthodoxy, perhaps, a *fata morgana,* an unsubstantial vision which eludes our groping hand and surrenders us to the illusion of blind faith? Indeed, it has come to pass in these days in which agnosticism is the fashionable philosophy of the time, that a religious indifference like a spiritual blight has taken a strong hold of the human mind so as to discredit any kind of orthodoxy, and the doctrine of the vanity of all faith, be it scientific or religious, has come to be recognized as the sum of all human wisdom. But the very existence of science plainly demonstrates that whatever errors we may have inherited from the scientists and the religious teachers of the past, we must never lose faith in the ideal of orthodoxy, which implies that there is truth and error, that the truth is one and self-consistent, and that whatever conflicts with the truth is error. This is no denial of the theory of the rela-

tivity of knowledge, nor does it imply the assumption that a man can become omniscient; but in spite of the relativity of knowledge, and in spite of the insufficiency of our means of investigating all the details of the immeasurable universe, we must remain assured that man can discern between truth and error, he can solve the various problems with which he is confronted, and he can realize, at least in part, and step by step, the ideal of orthodoxy.

Science has made many new discoveries in this century and has established truths which widen our spiritual horizon and deepen our philosophical understanding. Under the conditions it is but natural that our religious beliefs, too, will have to be revised and restated. They must be purified in the furnace of scientific critique, and I trust that thereby they will not lose in religious significance. On the contrary, they can only gain in every respect; and after the fusing and refining religion will be purer and shine brighter than ever.

There is no need either to defend or to denounce the old orthodoxy, but it is important to understand the nature of the ideal of orthodoxy and to propound on this basis a new conception of orthodoxy which is the only possible ground of a reconciliation of religion with science. Agnosticism will not save us, and blind faith has no warrant, but we must broaden both our science and our religion until our religion becomes scientific, and our science religious. On the one hand, we must scientifically and fearlessly investigate the

eternal psychical, social, and cosmic facts upon which religion rests; and on the other hand, we must recognize the divinity of scientific truth, imbue it with religious devotion, and seek its religious significance.

How often has religion been denounced in the name of science as superstition, and how often has science been pilloried in the name of religion as ungodly and profane! Scientists may err and religious doctrines may be wrong, but science cannot be anti-religious and religion cannot be anti-scientific; for what is science but the search for truth, according to the best, the most reliable, and most accurate methods of investigation, and what is religion but the love of truth applied to practical life!

It is understood that we must be on our guard not to accept the opinion of a scientist as genuine science, yet we should not denounce science itself or the principles of science. However much we may distrust the calculation of an example, and the logical conclusions of a syllogism, we cannot question the reliability of arithmetic or the trustworthiness of logic.

Such is the narrowness of our traditional conceptions of science and religion, that both are sought in their externalities. Religion is defined as a belief in dogmas, or as worship of one or several gods, or as the practice of ceremonies, such as incense burning, baptizing, and mass-reading, while science is described as a mere collecting, classifying, and collating of facts. And it is noteworthy that there are scientists who misunderstand the spirit of science and there are clergymen who have no idea of the meaning

of religion. How is that possible? Indeed it is natural; for the routine workers in both fields are so preoccupied with the exact observation of their traditional practices that they become absolutely unfit to understand the significance of their professions in the universal economy of mankind.

And can there be any doubt about the cause of the conflict between a one-sided science and one-sided religion? The cause of the conflict is on the one hand the paganism of those who, forgetful of the fact that dogmas are symbols, urge a belief in the letter, which inextricably implicates them more and more in absurdities until they begin to hate reason and decry the light of science because it blinds the eyes. On the other hand we are confronted with a lack of trust in truth that is widely spread among the men of science. There are many scientists who judge religious questions from their limited field of inquiry, and imagine that the lower spheres of nature are the whole of nature. Chemistry is expected to solve the problems of psychology, morality is subsumed under zoölogy, and science is identified with materialism. Man because he is an animal is supposed to be a beast. This is no exaggeration, for such and similar statements have been actually made by prominent naturalists. No wonder that where such a confusion of thought prevails those who set their trust in the letter of their sacred traditions will glory in the bankruptcy of science as being the best evidence of the truth of religion, while science will fall a prey to agnosticism and pessimism. No less an authority than Huxley pro-

nounced the dreary theory that nature and the laws of nature, including the laws that govern the social relations of man, are intrinsically immoral.

Here is not the place to refute the self-contradictory argument of those who rejoice in the alleged bankruptcy of science and vainly attempt by logical fallacies to prove the fallaciousness of reason. Suffice it to say that the extinction of the light of science will never make religion brighter. The moon is better seen when the sun is hidden; but if you extinguish the sun, even the moon will cease to shine. By rendering the Logos illogical, you not only make science impossible, but also change religion into the superstition of mere traditionalism. The acceptance or rejection of science means the parting path between genuine religion and superstitution.

What is science that, in the name of religion, it should be abused and denounced? Science formulates the facts of our experience in natural laws; it searches for and describes the eternal of nature. Thus science is the embodiment of the immutable world-order of the Logos that was in the beginning, of God in His revelation, and truly, "this is the stone which was set at naught of the builders, which is become the head of the corner." (Acts iv., II.)

Science offers a description of experience from which the purely subjective elements have been discarded. Science eliminates sentiment, passions, and prejudice, and undertakes to establish objective truth. Science drops the human of man; it liberates him from the limitations of the senses, and reveals before his

mental vision the secret inter-relation of cause and effect, and the order of immutable laws. In a word, science is super-human; it is the Jacob's ladder, which at its bottom touches the world of sense, while its top reaches into the heaven of spirit.

Whenever God speaks to man, it is not in the earthquake of bigotry or dogma, nor in the fire of fanaticism, but he comes in the still small voice, and the still small voice is heard in science, for science is an utter surrender of what we wish to believe to a recognition of the actual fact. Science is a hushing of all thought of self, so as to give room to a calm contemplation of truth.

If you want a religion that is truly catholic, let it be in accord with science.

Catholic is that which is universally acceptable, and what is more catholic than science? For the establishment of a catholic religion, therefore, we must select the objectivity of scientific truth as the cornerstone. This and nothing else is the eternal Logos which is exemplified in the noble lives of the prophets, and the incarnation of which constitutes the sonship of God. This and nothing else is the basis of religion; and no man can lay another foundation.

Science is sometimes erroneously supposed to be a human invention; it is represented as the truth of man, which is contrasted with the divine revelation of religious dogmas as being the truth of God. But science is not of human make; science cannot be fashioned by man as he pleases! Science is stern and unalterable; it is a revelation which cannot be invented

but must be discovered. There is a holiness in mathematics, and there is ethics in the multiplication table. On the other hand, dogmas such as the various churches have formulated as their platforms, are the expressions of human opinions. They have been framed by the religious leaders of the past and have been accepted or rejected through majority decisions of so-called ecumenical councils. They are, I grant, sacred documents of what our ancestors thought to be the truth; they have been cast in the mould of mighty personalities, but they are merely a reflection of the spirit of their age, including all its noble aspirations and shortcomings.

Our traditions and the formulations of belief, as set forth in the Credos of former centuries, are unquestionably important statements; they must be considered and reconsidered, and are in a sense authoritative, as coming from men whom we respect, but they art not a final decision of all problems; they possess no absolute authority and can bind neither our reason nor our conscience. It is our sacred duty to revise them again and again in the light of that direct revelation of truth which is always and constantly accessible to man. Man can find salvation only through a scrupulous self-examination and a right comprehension of the events of life.

If you find traditional formulations of faith acceptable, let them stand on the same principle as scientific truths. Scientific truths are always liable to revision, and no scientist makes the slightest objection to having his propositions revised. Why should theologians

do so? Scientific truths once rightly formulated need shun no criticism, since upon re-examination they will be corroborated; and, if they be misunderstood or forgotten, they can be rediscovered.

Science, it is true, appears as an enemy of the old dogmatism, which to the unthinking made religion easy. Science discredits blind faith and rejects the trust in the letter. It may destroy many long-cherished prejudices that have become dear to us. But if a dogma cannot stand scientific criticism, if it is not true, how can it comfort us? Let a dogma that is untrue go, and have trust in truth. The truth, whatever it be, let us be assured, will be the best. Truth is better than the most beautiful dream, and, if truth appears bitter at first sight, let us be patient. If science destroys, it is sure to give us something better.

While dogmas, viz., the platforms of the various churches, are man-made, we should not forget that they nevertheless reflect the truth of a revelation that is superhuman. They may not be true in their letter, yet they are full of meaning. The truths of this meaning appear in a new light with every advance of civilization and will be better understood at every stage reached by science. Let us always bear in mind that religion, although it must be one with science, is not science; the province of religion is the broad field of practical life, and its aim is to teach moral truths to the masses, not by proving them in logical deductions, but by explaining them in allegories, and the symbolic nature of ecclesiastical dogmas has never been doubted except by the most narrow-minded dogmatists. The

church actually calls the confession of faith a "symbolum,"* and Christ declared that he spoke in parables only. It is a perversion of the fundamental meaning of our religious revelation to demand a belief in the letter where confessedly from the beginning nothing but a symbolic expression of a deeper mystery was offered.

Neither the prophets, nor Christ, nor the apostles ever intended to set up a system of revelation that should be contrary to science. It is true that they proclaimed many truths which the sages of their time did not grasp—love of enemies and charity; but a deeper comprehension of the facts of life proved that, upon the whole, their ethical injunctions were right in spite of their apparent impracticability.

Let us not be afraid to analyze religion. Do not think that if the nature of the symbol is explained, nothing will be left. If the myth is understood, we become acquainted with the truth itself, which we

* The word *symbolum* (σύμβαλλον) is derived from the Greek συμβάλλειν, to throw together, meaning the fitting together of the two pieces of a ring or amulet broken in twain. There was in ancient Greece the institution of mutual hospitality among certain families in various cities, which was hereditary. A stranger who came to Athens from another Greek community went to the house of that Athenian citizen whose ancestors had entered into a bond of hospitality with his own ancestors; and there he presented, for the sake of identification and legitimation, the broken piece of his symbolum. When it fitted to the other piece that was in the hands of his host he was recognized as a friend and welcomed as a guest. Thus, symbolum originally denoted a mark or sign by which friends could recognize one another, and came to mean a ticket or a check, and also the watchword of soldiers. The early Christians used the word in the sense of token by which to recognize one another. He who knew the Christian symbolum by heart was, in times of persecution, freely admitted as a friend to their meetings; and it is natural that the symbolum in the religious conviction of the early Christians was expressed in those very words and allegories which, in accord with the established tradition, seemed to them the most adequate expression of the truth which they believed.

formerly had merely seen as through a glass, darkly, in the tinsel decking of poetic imagery.

Authority is sometimes contrasted with argument, and the weight of a name is proffered to check the boldness of progressive thought. But there is no sense in speaking of authority as opposed to reason; for if by authority is meant the confidence which we have in a person, what is it but our respect for the soundness of his judgment? Indeed, there is no authority of person; all authority is ultimately the authority of provable truth; it is the authority of science, and rests upon the superpersonal authority of the divine Logos.

To praise authority at the expense of science and reason is like accepting a greenback and repudiating the gold which the greenback represents. An unredeemable greenback is a mere scrap of paper, and authority not based upon experience that can critically be tested and verified by renewed experience, is a mere usurpation of power. There is no genuine authority which when analyzed is not reducible to experience, and as science is systematized experience, we should think that there is no sense in the contrast between science and authority.

While we must insist on the recognition of the authority of science, we should not be blind to the great preference of religion in having been the first to point out that justice is more powerful than violence, and charity stronger than vengeance. At present, religion being naturally conservative is lagging behind science, but there was a time when science

was lagging behind religion. Religious prophets have in former ages propounded moral ideals, sternly demanding their practical application, the rationality of which the scientists of the time were not sufficiently advanced to prove. Religion anticipated many moral truths which modern science is only now beginning to understand. When commending science as the ultimate criterion of truth, let us not forget the great service which religion rendered while science was still in its swaddling clothes!

To sum up: any faith that is irreconcilable with science is doomed. He who rejects science blights the life of religion. For the spirit of genuine religion is the same as the spirit of genuine science. Science is a divine revelation. Contempt for science and a deliberate suppression of reason is an intellectual sin; it is the sin against the spirit which cannot be forgiven, but must, if persisted in, ultimately lead to eternal perdition.

Therefore, what we need most dearly is orthodoxy, but let our orthodoxy be genuine.

THE LATE PROFESSOR ROMANES'S THOUGHTS ON RELIGION

ALL the publications of the Open Court Publishing Company, purely theoretical though they may appear to be, are brought out with a very practical end in view, which is nothing less than the reconstruction of religion upon the broad basis of modern science. When we publish scientific works, like Ribot's psychological inquiries, Max Müller's expositions of the nature of language and of thought, Ernst Mach's *History of Mechanics* and his *Popular Lectures* on the methods of scientific research, we do so because we trust that the spread of sound science is the best and most effective propaganda of true religion. We acquired from Prof. George John Romanes the right of publishing the American edition of his book, *Darwin and After Darwin,* because we recognize in the doctrine of evolution one of the most important and fundamental religious truths, upon the basis of which the old traditional dogmas will have to be revised and radically remodelled; and we also brought out the American edition of the same scientist's posthumous *Thoughts on Religion.* It is this latter book to which the present essay is devoted, for it seems necessary to explain why we should promote the circulation of a

book which in many important points differs from our own solution of the religious problem.

In our opinion, science and religion are not two separate spheres which must be kept apart lest the one should interfere with the other; but, on the contrary, both form integral parts of man's spiritual being and are closely interwoven as the web and woof of our souls. Science is the search for truth, including the results of the search; it is the best recognition of the truth according to the most accurate and painstaking methods at our command; and religion is the endeavor to lead a life in agreement with the truth. What is religion but truth in its moral bearings upon practical life!

In opposition to this standpoint the *Thoughts on Religion* by Professor Romanes are antiscientific and agnostic; indeed, they stand in certain respects so much in contrast to the labor of his life, as to appear a disavowal of his former position.

While our religious convictions are quite definite and outspoken we do not propound them dogmatically. We simply submit them to the world for consideration; we solicit criticism from all quarters, because we trust that they can stand the severest strictures. However, supposing they could be proved to be erroneous, we shall not hesitate to publicly confess our errors; for it is not our aim to propagate our views because they are ours, but because we believe that they are true. If it be right that we must in religious questions sacrifice our intellect and cease thinking, let the truth prevail.

When the doctrine of evolution first dawned upon Romanes, it came to him, not as a religious idea, but as a revolutionary doctrine, which was slowly but radically destroying the very basis of his most sacred belief; and in order to understand the struggles which at that time distracted the mind of the young scientist, we ought to bear in mind that he was in his inmost nature not only deeply religious, but even uncommonly reverent and pious. Judging from his essay on Prayer, which he wrote in 1873, when still a youth, and by which he gained the Burney Prize at Cambridge, he was possessed of a childlike trust in the Lord, his Creator and Heavenly Father, whom he regarded as governing the world by general laws. Would a youth so settled in his convictions give up his faith when confronted with scientific conceptions irreconcilable with the errors of his traditional religion? How could he help it? Science is not of human make; science is the superhuman power of the silent voice of the Holy Spirit, who reveals himself to mankind in an accumulative revelation, and no one can withdraw himself from its irresistible influence.

Romanes had thoroughly imbibed the rigid definitions of the traditional dogmatism. In order to substantiate the so-called orthodox conception of Christianity our ecclesiastical instructors have gotten into the habit of telling us again and again that there is no religion save such as is theistic, and that there is no theism, save such as is a belief in a personal God, and a personal God means a distinct individual being with an ego-consciousness like that found in man, only on

an infinitely higher plane—a view which we call anthropotheism. Accepting explanations of religion, such as these, it was natural that Romanes, as soon as he became convinced of the errors of his narrow church-theism, should fall a prey to a desolate skepticism, and already in 1876, if not sooner, he wrote a book entitled *A Candid Examination of Theism by Physicus*,* which analyzes the crude conception of the traditional God-idea, and finds it wanting.

We quote the following passage from the book, which is sufficient evidence of the author's sincerity:

"And now, in conclusion, I feel it is desirable to state that any antecedent bias with regard to Theism which I individually possess is unquestionably on the side of traditional beliefs. It is therefore with the utmost sorrow that I find myself compelled to accept the conclusions here worked out; and nothing would have induced me to publish them, save the strength of my conviction that it is the duty of every member of society to give his fellows the benefit of his labors for whatever they may be worth. Just as I am confident that truth must in the end be the most profitable for the race, so I am persuaded that every individual endeavor if unbiased and sincere, ought without hesitation to be made the common property of all men, no matter in what direction the results of its promulgation may appear to tend. And so far as the ruination of individual happiness is concerned, no one can have a more lively perception than myself of the possibly disastrous tendency of my work. So far as I am individually concerned, the result of this analysis has been to show that, whether I regard the problem of Theism on the lower plane of strictly relative probability, or on the higher plane of purely formal considerations, it equally becomes my obvious duty to

*Open Court Publishing Company, Chicago, ed. 1914. The book first appeared in 1878 (at Trübner's), and we read in the preface that it was written *several* years before, but had been left unpublished.

stifle all belief of the kind which I conceive to be the noblest, and to discipline my intellect with regard to this matter into an attitude of the purest scepticism. And forasmuch as I am far from being able to agree with those who affirm that the twilight doctrine of the 'new faith' is a desirable substitute for the waning splendor of 'the old,' I am not ashamed to confess that with this virtual negation of God the universe to me has lost its soul of loveliness; and although from henceforth the precept to 'work while it is day' will doubtless but gain an intensified force from the terribly intensified meaning of the words that 'the night cometh when no man can work,' yet when at times I think, as think at times I must, of the appalling contrast between the hallowed glory of that creed which once was mine, and the lonely mystery of existence as now I find it,—at such times I shall ever feel it impossible to avoid the sharpest pang of which my nature is susceptible. For whether it be due to my intelligence not being sufficiently advanced to meet the requirements of the age, or whether it be due to the memory of those sacred associations which to me at least were the sweetest that life has given, I cannot but feel that for me, and for others who think as I do, there is a dreadful truth in those words of Hamilton,—Philosophy having become a meditation, not merely of death, but of annihilation, the precept *know thyself* has become transformed into the terrific oracle to Œdipus: 'Mayest thou ne'er know the truth of what thou art.'"

While Romanes pursued his scientific work unswervingly, completing works on *The Mental Evolution in Man, The Mental Evolution in Animals* and *Animal Intelligence,* and beginning his *Darwin and After Darwin,* he wrote several essays bearing on religion. They are:

1. "Mind and Motion." A lecture, published in *The Contemporary Review,* July, 1885, p. 74.

2. "The World as an Eject," published in *The Contemporary Review* in 1886, p. 44.

3. "The Evidence of Design in Nature," a paper read before the Aristotelian Society in 1889, and published in its proceedings as a contribution to a Symposium.

4. Three articles on the "Influence of Science Upon Religion," written in 1889, but remaining unpublished for unknown reasons.

In these essays Professor Romanes takes an unequivocal stand on the ground of monism, yet when he comes to the question of theism he assumes an attitude of agnosticism which does not venture to decide the problem but "leaves a clear field of choice between theism and atheism." The secret reason of his position which probably was hidden from his own mind was in our opinion this: he felt instinctively that there was some truth in theism, yet he could not discover by his reasoning powers what it was. He saw the errors of the narrow church-theism, but he did not venture to broaden his idea of God so as to conform it to his better scientific insight.

The agnostic reserve of Professor Romanes's position might have easily appeared to his readers as an unwillingness to decide a dilemma, which, whatever horn he chose, could only involve him in troubles of various kinds; but the fact is that he was sorely perplexed in his own mind. On the religious problem all his sympathies were enlisted against his rational faculties, and he saw no other hope for the defense of the faith which he so dearly but vainly longed for,

than by denying his rational faculties the right to have anything to say in the matter, and this, his attitude, he called, in distinction to the Spencerian agnosticism, "pure agnosticism."

Between the lines of Romanes's *Thoughts on Religion* we can see the distress of his soul. What a poor evidence is agnosticism! It is like a straw to which a drowning man desperately but vainly clings. For it goes without saying that agnosticism of every color is as much favorable to dogmatic Christianity, to Mohammedanism, Brahmanism, theosophy, and mysticism of any description, as to Freethought and Nihilism.

With such sentiments Professor Romanes pondered in the last year of his life on the problems of theism, faith, free will, the existence and origin of evil, causation and creation, regeneration, revelation, the miracles, Christian dogmas, such as the Trinity, and Incarnation, the fall of Adam, and Christian demonology. The notes which he wrote down on these topics a few months before his death were originally intended to counteract or offset in a measure, to his own or other people's satisfaction, the propositions contained in the *Candid Examination of Theism by Physicus.* He expected to work out a book on the subject which should appear under the title *A Candid Examination of Religion by Metaphysicus,* for he had found in the metaphysical x the sole place of safety for the God of Christianity. After his death the notes were handed to the Rev. Charles Gore, Canon of Westminster and a friend of the deceased scientist, who was to do with them what he thought best. Canon

Gore decided upon their publication together with other materials and his own editorial comments, and the book bears the title *"Thoughts on Religion,* by the late George John Romanes, Edited by Charles Gore, M. A., Canon of Westminster."*

The book contains:

1. Two essays by Romanes on the "Influence of Science Upon Religion," written in 1891, the third essay being omitted, because, as the editor declares, "Romanes's view of the relation between science and faith in revealed religion are better and more maturely expressed in the notes." (pp. 37-88).

2. The Notes for a work on A Candid Examination of Religion (pp. 91-183).

3. Editorial Comments. Both parts open with editorial prefaces (pp. 5-33, p. 105, and pp. 91-96), and the whole book closes with a "Note by the Editor" (p. 184).

Mr. Gore claims that "both Essays and Notes represent the same tendency of a mind from a position of unbelief in the Christian revelation toward one of belief in it" (p. 6); and although Romanes's conviction cannot be described as "a position of settled orthodoxy," although he did not recover "the activity or habit of faith," we are told (on p. 184) that he yet "returned before his death to that full, deliberate communion with the Church of Jesus Christ which he had for so many years been conscientiously compelled to forego."

*The Open Court Publishing Company, Chicago and London.

There are people who think that there is no salvation except in the church. For their benefit be it stated that such a man as Professor Romanes was in the darkest days of his boldest skepticism a better Christian than many a minister and preacher who finds no difficulty in avowing allegiance to the thirty-nine articles of the Anglican Church.

We attach to the book a great importance, for it proves the depth of Romanes's religious sentiment. There may be a doubt whether it was wise and just to publish the notes—just toward the sacred memory of the deceased; and we feel sure that many friends of the late Professor Romanes will regret the appearance of the booklet, for the notes are quite unfinished and incoherent. Indeed, the looseness of argumentation indicates that their author, when he penned them, was no longer at his best. Nevertheless, we believe Canon Gore was right in not withholding them from the world, because Romanes was great enough even for his weaker productions to command a general interest, the more so as they throw a searchlight into the most secret recesses of his innermost soul; and it is of interest to us to know not only how a man like Romanes argued but also what he longed for and on what side his sympathies were most strongly enlisted. Taking the notes as they stand, and bearing in mind that their author's life was cut short before he could revise them and work his way out from the narrowness of agnosticism into a clear comprehension of the glory of true religion, we take them as witnesses of Romanes's deep love of God, whom he still harbored

in his heart after his mind through scientific investigations had lost belief in his existence.

We can now understand what an abyss of desolation lies in the question which Romanes uttered in the concluding chapter, page 418, of the first volume of *Darwin and After Darwin,* "Where is now thy God?" And his answer bids us be resigned. He says: "And when the cry of Reason pierces the heart of Faith, it remains for Faith to answer now as she has always answered before—and answered with that trust which is at once her beauty and her life—Verily, thou art a God that hidest thyself."

Concerning Professor Romanes's progress from a position of unbelief toward one of belief, we are unable to discover any evidence of great consequence. For the agnostic position as the sole refuge for believers is already indicated in the *Candid Examination of Theism.* Even here Romanes says:

"Although the latter deductions have clearly shown the existence of Deity to be superfluous in a scientific sense, the formal considerations in question have no less clearly opened up beyond the sphere of science a possible *locus* for the existence of Deity; so that if there are any facts supplied by experience for which the atheistic deductions appear insufficient to account, we are still free to account for them in a relative sense by the hypothesis of Theism. And, it may be urged, we do find such an unexplained residuum in the correlation of general laws in the production of cosmic harmony."

On the other hand, instead of retracting his opinions in the Notes, Romanes expressly retained them, only proposing several important modifications and limitations. While he feels that "further thought

has enabled" him "to detect serious errors or rather oversights," in his book he still thinks "that from the premises there laid down the conclusions result in due logical sequence." He continues, "as a matter of mere ratiocination, I am not likely ever to detect any serious flaws, especially as this has not been done by anybody else during the many years of its existence."

Romanes finds two faults with his former work: undue confidence in merely syllogistic conclusions, and a lack of care in examining the foundations of his criticism. He says:

"The metaphysics of Christianity may be all false in fact, and yet the spirit of Christianity may be true in substance, i. e., it may be the highest 'good gift from above' as yet given to man."

How true! But granted that it is true, should we not rouse ourselves to investigate what is the spirit of Christianity so that we may do away with its false metaphysics? Professor Romanes turns for help to the wrong door. Agnosticism, even Professor Romanes's "pure agnosticism," will never make us take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees; and agnosticism, if we are willing to believe, makes us credulous, while if we are unwilling to believe, makes us indifferent, for what is the use of our troubles if the truth lies in some superscientific field, where we can never hope to approach it?

Passing by the comments on Adam and the Fall, the blindness of reason with regard to the doctrines

of the Incarnation and the Trinity and similar utterances—topics the serious discussion of which we should not expect from the author of *Darwin and After Darwin*—we think that the weakest part of Professor Romanes's arguments are his contradictory applications of his principle of pure agnosticism. In one place he complains about *"professed"* agnostics who refused to go to a famous spiritualist, or to test the art of a mind-reader, and he says of them that they violated their philosophy by their conduct (page 109), yet when dogmatic questions appear, such as whether Jesus was the son of God, he argues that we are, *quâ* pure agnostics, logically forbidden to touch them (p. 106 and *passim*).

After all, Professor Romanes makes less use of his agnosticism than appears consistent and attempts a reconciliation between religion and science. He says:

"I intend to take science and religion in their present highly developed states as such and show that on a *systematic examination of the latter by the methods of the former*,* the 'conflict' between the two may be not merely 'reconciled' as regards the highest generalities of each, but entirely abolished in all matters of detail which can be regarded as of any great importance."

The principle of deciding the conflict between science and religion by "a systematic examination of the latter by the methods of the former" is the fundamental contention of that aspiration which we have defined as the "Religion of Science." In full agreement with the maxim of the Religion of Science, Ro-

* Italics are ours.

manes insists upon theists abandoning all the assumptions of which they have been guilty, saying:

"True religion is indeed learning her lesson that something is wrong in her method of fighting, and many of her soldiers are now waking up to the fact that it is here that her error lies,—as in past times they woke up to see the error of denying the movement of the earth, the antiquity of the earth, the origin of species by evolution, etc."

The only possible condition to fighting, says Romanes, lies in the distinction between the natural and the supernatural,—a distinction that has always by both sides been regarded as sound (p. 121). He now proposes to efface the boundary line that separates the supernatural from the natural and says: "Once grant that the supernatural is 'natural' and all possible ground of dispute is removed."*

This is the reconciliation between religion and science which we propose, and it may be formulated in analogy with Christ's words: "Render unto Science the things that are Science's!"

* * *

There are many more things that ought to be said, but they are of less importance, and we can only lightly touch upon some of them in a few disconnected remarks.

We believe that Romanes's distinction between Huxley's and Spencer's agnosticism is neither clear

*Compare on the "supernatural" such passages in *The Monist* editorials as Vol. V. No. 1, p. 99: "We deny the existence of the supernatural in a dualistic sense; but suppose we call such higher features of nature as appear in man's ethical aspirations hyperphysical or supernatural because they rise above the lower and purely physical elements of the universe, we must confess that the supernatural lies hidden in the natural and is destined to grow from it according to the cosmic law of existence."

nor correct (p. 108). Professor Huxley's agnosticism is not what Romanes defines it, viz., "an attitude of reasoned ignorance touching everything that lies beyond the sphere of sense-perception." Mathematics lies beyond the sphere of sense-perception, yet Huxley does not extend his agnosticism to mathematical methods or conclusions.

The fact that St. Paul's epistles are regarded by the critics as genuine is mentioned three times (pp. 155, 168, 169), and it is claimed that this is "enough to show the belief in Christ's contemporaries" (p. 169). Indeed! But what of it? Have we not sufficient evidence of the belief of our own contemporaries in the various Christs who have risen among us? Schweinfurth and Teed are living in our midst, and the authenticity of their publications cannot be doubted. The important question is not whether or no Paul wrote his epistles, but whether the ethics of the epistles is good or bad; and, granting that Paul said many noble things, I yet wish to see the orthodox clergyman who would venture to defend Paul's low, not to say vulgar, conception of marriage!*

Romanes speaks of "some superadded faculties of our mind," explaining them in one place as "the

*The sole motive for marriage which St. Paul proposes is, 'It is better to marry than to burn.' The holiest instincts that would induce men and women to join their fates in a sacred alliance are utterly ignored. Nothing is said of the mutual sympathy and friendship that bind soul to soul much more closely that sexual appetites. No consideration is taken of the children to be born, and the very lowest desires alone are given as an *excuse* for entering into the state of matrimony, the holiness of which St. Paul does not understand. His view of marriage proves that he had no right conception of the ethics of human sex-relations. We admire St. Paul in many respects, but we must say that his view of marriage is un-Christian; it is unworthy of his sacred office as an apostle: it is a blemish on our Bible.

heart and the will," as the "religious instinct," and other moral sentiments, and also as "spiritual intuition," or an "organ of spiritual discernment." He glories in the "infinitude of mystery sufficient to satisfy the most exacting mystic." We say that the "superadded faculties," which are such as man's conscience, his religious aspirations and moral ideals, do not lie without the pale of scientific investigation. On the contrary, the better we understand their nature, the greater is their chance of nobler development and purification.

Such phrases as "first cause" and "infinite mind," which are word-combinations without sense, abound unduly in the notes and help not a little to increase the difficulties which present themselves to the mind of Romanes and which have become sufficiently bewildering through the sensitiveness of his religious nature.*

Romanes gave a great deal of his thought to the problem of the existence of pain in the world. How is it possible that God, if he be good, can allow his creatures to be hopelessly exposed to "hideously cruel" and terrible sufferings? Romanes says in his second essay on "The Influence of Science Upon Religion," after speaking of the agonies of a rabbit panting in the iron jaws of a spring trap:

"What are we to think of a Being who, with yet higher faculties of thought and knowledge, and with an unlimited

* For an exposition of the errors which lie concealed in the phrase "first cause," see *Primer of Philosophy*, pp. 146-147, and *Fundamental Problems*, p. 88 et seq. As to "infinite mind," see *Homilies of Science*, p. 102 et seq.

choice of means to secure His ends, has contrived untold thousands of mechanisms no less diabolical? In short, so far as Nature can teach us, or 'observation can extend,' it does appear that the scheme, if it is a scheme, is the product of a Mind which differs from the more highly evolved type of human mind in that it is immensely more intellectual without being nearly so moral."

The problem of the existence of pain in the world is an unsolvable mystery on the hypothesis of the traditional theism, and no theory of "probation" can satisfactorily explain the difficulty. But Romanes declares that, after all, we are not bound to adopt the idea of a "carpenter-God," as Mr. S. Alexander calls the anthropomorphic notion of a Creator which implies that the world-order is a "scheme."

As to God's responsibility for pain, we should bear in mind that one of the most obvious features of anthropomorphism in the God-idea is the attribute of "moral goodness." In the same way that God is not an individual being, that he is not a huge ego or person like ourselves, but a superpersonal omnipresence, so he is neither moral nor good nor ethical; for God is the standard of goodness; he is the norm, conformity to which is the condition of ethics; he is the ultimate authority for all moral conduct. He is neither moral nor immoral, but unmoral, or let us say "supramoral." If God were the carpenter of the world, he would be responsible for its laws and arrangements, including all the cruelties implied by them, and he could not escape the condemnation of immorality.

Romanes has found the right answer when he says:

"For aught that we can tell to the contrary, it may be quite as 'anthropomorphic' a notion to attribute morality to God as it would be to attribute those capacities for sensuous enjoyment with which the Greeks endowed their divinities. The Deity may be as high above the one as the other—or rather perhaps we may say as much eternal to the one as to the other. Without being supramoral, and still less immoral, He may be un-moral; our ideas of morality may have no meaning as applied to Him."

Such was Romanes's pious disposition of mind that, if it ever had been possible to defend the old traditional dogmatism before the tribunal of reason, he would have done so, and we can repeat of Romanes without hesitation the quotation from Virgil, which D. F. Strauss applied to Schleiermacher:

"Si Pergamum dextra defendi posset
Hac certe defensa fuisset!"

* * *

There is one more point to be mentioned. Professor Romanes adopted the idea so often proclaimed in the pulpit, that "no one can 'believe' in God, or *a fortiori* in Christ, without also a severe effort of will," and he adds:

"Yet the desire is not strong enough to sustain the will in perpetual action, so as to make the continual sacrifices which Christianity entails. Perhaps the hardest of these sacrifices to an intelligent man is that of his own intellect. At least I am certain that this is so in my own case."

Romanes rummages his brain for arguments to silence the voice of reason. He says (p. 167):

"The force of Butler's argument about our being incompetent judges is being more and more increased.

"The unbiassed answer of pure agnosticism ought reasonably to be, in the words of John Hunter, 'Do not think; try.'"

And he tried! What tortures this man must have suffered in his eagerness not to think but to believe! His religious struggles may have been the physical cause of his premature death; for distraction of mind is more injurious than overwork. And after all he was anxious to attempt the impossible. We read on pp. 132-133:

"Yet I cannot bring myself so much as to make a venture in the direction of faith. For instance, regarded from one point of view it seems reasonable enough that Christianity should have enjoined the *doing* of the doctrine as a necessary condition to ascertaining (i. e., 'believing') its truth. But from another, and my more habitual point of view, it seems almost an affront to reason to make any such 'fool's experiment,'—just as to some scientific men it seems absurd and childish to expect them to investigate the 'superstitious' follies of modern spiritualism. Even the simplest act of will in regard to religion—that of prayer—has not been performed by me for at least a quarter of a century, simply because it has seemed so impossible to pray, as it were, hypothetically, that much as I have always desired to be able to pray, I cannot will the attempt."*

Is it not a shame on our church dogmatism to let a man like Romanes, an intellectual giant, torture himself on the rack in efforts to conform to the religion which he had been taught to love with all the fervor of his soul?† Professor Romanes imagined that God

* Kant condemns "the *prosopopœia,*" or face-making, of "hypothetical" prayer as hypocrisy, and says: "The consequence of this is that he who has made great moral progress ceases to pray, for honesty is one of his principal maxims. And further, that those whom one surprises in prayer are ashamed of themselves."

† How true is what Mach says of the conflict between science and theology! In his *Science of Mechanics*, p. 446, we read: "It would be a great mistake to suppose that the phrase 'warfare of science' is a correct description of its general historic attitude toward religion, that the only repression of intellectual development has come from priests,

requested from him the sacrifice of his intellect, and what was he not willing to do for God's sake! As Abraham went out to sacrifice his only son Isaac, so Romanes seriously tried to slaughter his reason on the altar of faith.

My blood begins to boil at the thought, for I remember my own experiences and the dark hours of despair in which I had, against my own will, lost my God and my religion, and felt all the miseries of hell. However willing I was to sacrifice my vanity, my egoism, my pride, my pleasures and joys, my self and my fondest hopes, I was yet unable to surrender my better knowledge, and only after many hours of sore trial did I work my way out again into the glorious liberty of the children of God. I came to the conclusion that no such sacrifice is expected of us as a surrender of our intellect; for our intellect is but the reflection of God's nature in our soul. Man's reason is the light of his life; it is a product of that world-logos which science traces in all natural laws, and it is the seal of man's divinity which constitutes his similarity to God.

What is the lesson of Romanes's *Thoughts on Religion?*

and that if their hands had been held off, growing science would have shot up with stupendous velocity. No doubt external opposition did have to be fought; and the battle with it was no child's play. But investigators have had another struggle on their hands, and by no means an easy one, the struggle with their own preconceived ideas." Professor Romanes is the most modern instance of the severity of the conflict which often distracts the soul of a scientist. Oh, what a noble mind was there o'erthrown—and by what? By his devotion to dogmas, the spirit of which he felt to be true, and the allegorical garb of which he knew to be full of errors.

Romanes's posthumous work is a *mene tekel* which reminds us of the importance of the religious problem. We cannot and must not leave it unsettled in worldly indifference. We must attend to it and investigate it bravely and conscientiously. We can no longer denounce reason or silence our intellectual needs, for it is God himself who speaks in the voice of reason; and the progress of science is his most glorious revelation, which ecclesiasticism cannot smother. Indeed, the suppression of reason is the sin against the Holy Ghost which cannot be forgiven but will inevitably lead, if persisted in, to eternal perdition.

The sad case of Professor Romanes's religious struggles reminds us of the significant words of the late Field-Marshal von Moltke who, with reference to dogmatic religion, says in the posthumous, deeply religious *Thoughts of Comfort,* which contain his confession of faith: "I am afraid that the zealot in the pulpit, who will persuade where he cannot convince, preaches Christians out of the church."

Our church Christianity is not as yet free from paganism. By paganism we understand a belief in the letter of parables or allegorical dogmas to the detriment of their spirit; and tradition and habit combine to make our theologians worship the letter that killeth. A one-sided training warps their judgment. Their notions of God, the sacraments, miracles, inspiration, prayer, Christ's sonship, and other religious ideas are, as a rule, more pagan than they themselves are aware. The constitutions of most churches are

so formulated as to make a belief in the literal meaning of symbols the test of orthodoxy, and Christians are urged to set their trust upon myths. For the higher education of the clergy we would propose, therefore, that every theologian should study at least one of the natural sciences or mathematics. It would be the best way, perhaps the only way, to teach them the sternness of truth and to dispel their anthropomorphic notions of God.

The narrowness of ecclesiasticism has estranged many noble minds from religion. Let our clergy see to it that room be made for intellectuality in our churches; and the light of science will purify the dark corners in which the superstitions of past ages still continue to exercise their baneful influence.

Romanes has much to say of the inner voice, intuition, and inspiration, but whatever form the subjective instincts of our religious nature may take, they possess merely preliminary power of decision and have no authority in comparison with objectively demonstrable truth. The verdict of conscience is very valuable, because it frequently reveals deep moral truth in a prophet's vision: yet is it neither absolute nor reliable, for it must seek its ratification before the tribunal of science. So far as human evolution has gone, science alone is possessed of that catholicity which is so sorely needed in religion.

There is no peace of soul for him whose religion has not passed through the furnace of scientific criticism, where it is cleansed of all the slag and dross of paganism. If God ever spoke to man, science is the

burning bush; and if there is any light by which man can hope to illumine his path so as to make firm steps, it is the light of science. Let us, therefore, make religion scientific and science religious. Let us, on the one hand, imbue religion with the spirit of science, with its rigorous criticism, strict exactness, and stern devotion to truth; and on the other hand, let us open our eyes to the moral and religious importance of the results of scientific inquiry. The ultimate aim of science is to reveal to man the religion of truth.

Let the light of science illumine both our minds and our sentiments; for science is holy, and the light of science is the dwelling-place of God.

THE REVISION OF A CREED.

WE have at present the strange spectacle that in one of our churches the proposition is discussed to change some grave particulars of creed. The old doctrines have become "unpreachable," as it is expressed, either because the ministers no longer believe them, or because people are loath to listen to ideas which now appear as monstrosities and absurdities.

We naturally hail the progress of a church and its development into broader views of religious truth. Yet at the same time we feel the littleness of the advance. What is the progress of a few steps, if a man has to travel hundreds of miles! Moreover, what is any progress, if it is done under the pressure of circumstances only and not from a desire to advance and keep abreast with the true spirit of the times! The change of a creed should not be forced upon a church from without by the progress of unchurched thinkers, but it should result from the growth and expanse of its own life. The church, as the moral instructor of mankind, should not be dragged along behind the triumphant march of humanity, but should deploy in front with the vanguard of science!

The eternal damnation of noble-minded heathen

and of the tender-souled infants who happen to die unbaptized, was sternly believed in by the ancestors of our Presbyterian friends. They declared, without giving any reasonable argument for their opinion, that this is part of the divine order of things, and whosoever does not believe it, will be damned for all eternity, together with the wise Socrates and the virtuous Confucius.

Who made Calvin the councilor of divine providence and who gave him the right of electing or rejecting the souls of men? On what ground could his narrow view, excusable in his time, be incorporated into the creed of a church? The argument on which Calvin's view rests, was very weak, but the founders of the Presbyterian Church being convinced of its truth, thought to strengthen it by incorporating the doctrine into their Confession. An idea, once sanctified by tradition, has a tenacious life. Reverence for the founders of a church will keep their errors sacred and will not allow an impartial investigation of their opinions.

Reverence is a good thing; but all reverence toward men, be they ever so venerable, must be controlled by the reverence for truth. And this is the worst part of the change of the Confession. The change, it appears, is not made because the objectionable doctrines are recognized as errors; but simply because they are at the present time too repulsive for popular acceptance.

Why are the doctrines of eternal punishment not openly and confessedly branded as errors? Why can

it not be acknowledged that tenets which our fathers considered as truths of divine revelation, were after all their personal and private opinions only?

We ask why, but receive no explanation. Yet there is a reason that lurks behind, although it seems as if the men who are most concerned were not conscious of it. If the error were acknowledged, a principle would be pronounced which opens the door to a greater and more comprehensive reform. And such a reform is not wanted. The clergy seem to be afraid of it. If the error is conceded, it means the denial of the infallibility of the Confession. The dogmas of the church cease to be absolute verities; and truth is recognized above the creed of the church, as the highest court of appeal—truth, *ascertainable by philosophical enquiry and scientific research.*

This would be equivalent to the abolition of all dogmas and would mean the enthronement of a principle to fill their place. This principle, if we look at it closely, is nothing new; it is an old acquaintance of ours; it is the same principle on which science stands. And the recognition of this principle would be the conciliation between science and religion once for all.

Brethren, do not shut your eyes in broad daylight, but look freely about and follow the example of the great founder of Christianity. Worship God not in vain repetitions, not in pagan adoration, as if God were a man like ourselves. Worship God in spirit and in truth. Acknowledge the superiority of truth above your creed, and be not ashamed of widening the pale of your churches.

If you acknowledge the supremacy of truth and make your changes in the Confession because truth compels you to make them, your progress will be that of a man who walketh upright and straight. But if you do not acknowledge the superiority of truth above your creed, if you identify truth with your creed, your progress will be the advance of a soldier loitering in the rear of his army, who is afraid of being left behind. You will unwillingly have to yield to the necessity of a change; and you will have to do it again and again, and always without dignity.

Is it dignified to alter a religious creed because it appears as a relic of barbarism, because it has become odious to the people, and because it no longer suits their tastes? Your Confession should be allegiance to truth. Will you degrade it to be the unstable expression of the average opinion of your members?

There is but one way to free yourselves from all these difficulties. Recognize no dogma as absolute and reverence no confession as infallible; but let truth, ascertainable truth, be the supreme judge of all doctrines and of all traditions.

Your Bible, your hymn book, your catechism, the history of your church, and the reminiscences of your venerable leaders shall remain respected among yourself and children, but let them not be overrated in their authority. Truth reigns above them all, and the holiness of truth is the foundation of all true religion.

When Luther stood before the emperor and the representatives of church and state, he begged to be refuted, and if he were refuted, he promised to keep

silence; but as he was not, he continued to preach and he preached boldly in the name of truth as one that had authority. Therefore let religious progress be made as in the era of the Reformation, not in complaisance to popular opinion, but squarely in the name of truth.

BEHOLD! I MAKE ALL THINGS NEW.

THE REFORMATION OF CHRISTIANITY THROUGH THE HIGHER CRITICISM AND A NEW ORTHODOXY.

THE old year is gone, the new year has come, and we are again reminded of the truism that life is both transient and immortal. The statement appears contradictory, but the fact is undeniable. Nothing persists and yet everything endures. The changes that take place are transformations in which everything continues to exercise an influence according to its nature and importance.

Science has changed our life and is still changing it, raising our civilization to a higher plane, and making us conscious of the great possibilities of invention, which by far outstrip the boldest promises of the illusions of magic. But science affects also our religion: the very foundations of morality and faith seem to give way under our feet, and lamentations are heard that, if the least iota in our beliefs be altered, desolation will prevail and the light that so far has illumined our path will be extinguished. Many earnest believers are full of anxiety on account of the results of the scientific Bible-research, commonly called the Higher Criticism, which threatens to destroy Christianity and appears to leave nothing tangible to be-

lieve or hope for. The old orthodoxy is tottering in all its positions, and nothing seems left which can be relied upon.

O ye of little faith! It is the old dogmatism only that falls to the ground, but not religion, and not even orthodoxy. Many ideas that were dear to you have become illusory; you did not understand their allegorical nature, and now that they burst before your eyes like soap-bubbles, you while gazing at them are dismayed like children who will not be comforted.

Orthodoxy means "right doctrine" and it is but natural to think that if our orthodoxy is hopelessly lost, scepticism will prevail and we must be satisfied with the conclusion that there is no stability in the world and that nothing can be known for certain. But because the old orthodoxy fails there is no reason to say that orthodoxy itself in the original and proper sense of the term is a vain hope. Bear in mind that the nature of science is the endeavor to establish an unquestionable orthodoxy on the solid foundation of evidence and proof?

The very power that destroys the errors of the past is born of the same spirit which gave life to the ages gone by so long as they were the living present. The authority of science is not a power of evil, but it is of the same source as the noble aspirations for a higher life which were revealed through the pens of prophets and holy men who, yearning for truth and righteousness, wrote the scriptures and called the church into existence in the hope of building up a kingdom of heaven on earth. The allegories in which the past

spoke have ceased to be true to us who want the truth, according to the scientific spirit of the age, in unmistakable terms and exact formulas. But the aspiration lives on, and a deeper scientific insight into our religious literature does not come to destroy religion; it destroys its errors and thus purifies religion and opens another epoch in the evolution of religious life. The negation of the Biblical criticism is only a preliminary work, which prepares the way for positive issues; scepticism may be a phase through which we have to pass, but the final result will be the recognition of a new orthodoxy—the orthodoxy of scientific truth, which discards the belief in the letter, but preserves the spirit, and stands in every respect as high above the old orthodoxy as astronomy ranges above astrology.

The Bible, which is unqualifiedly that collection of books in the literature of the world which has exercised the most potent influence upon the civilization of the world, is not wisely read, even in Evangelical countries, and where it is read it is mostly misunderstood. The pious exalt it as the word of God, and believe its contents as best they can, either literally or the main spirit of its doctrines; while the infidel points out its incongruities and pillories its monstrosities. Need we add that the mistaken pretensions of the bigot justify the caustic sarcasm of the scoffer? But there is another attitude which we can take towards the Bible. It is that of a reader eager to learn and impartial in investigation. To the person that studies them in the same spirit that the historian studies Greek

and Roman literature, the Biblical books appear as the documents of the religious evolution of mankind. Such men as Goethe and Humboldt, who read the Bible appreciatively but without piety, so called, had only words of praise, and found in it an inexhaustible source of wisdom and poetry. Piety, in the right sense and in the right place, is a good thing, but if we read documents, such as the Bible contains, not with an open mind, but with a complete submission of judgment, and prayingly, one eye on the Scriptures, the other turned up to heaven, we are as apt to distort their meaning, and render ourselves unfit to comprehend their purport as is the iconoclast, who goes over its pages with no other intention than in quest of absurdities.

The people of Israel were not, at the beginning of their history, in possession of a pure religion. Their world-conception was apparently not much different from that of their neighbors. Their God was a tribal Deity, and their religion was henotheism, not monotheism. It was mainly racial tenacity which prompted them to serve him alone. The national party clung to their God with an invincible faith which was more patriotic than religious. Yet this fidelity to the national God was, at bottom, a profoundly moral instinct; it was not mere superstition but contained the germ of a genuine faith, which was never annihilated by misfortunes, but only modified and freed from its crude misconceptions. The grander conception of monotheism developed slowly through a long series of sad experiences, of disappointments, and tribulations,

from henotheism, until it became entheism in Christ, who said God is spirit, God is love, and when he was asked where his father was, replied: The father is here in our hearts; and I and the father are one.

When reading the Bible, we must bear in mind that the God-idea of the Israelites was not free from superstition, and we shall the better understand the moral element which was present in it from the beginning. The prophets and priests of old were groping after a better and better understanding of God, and they were by no means agreed upon his nature or name. There were parties among the prophets as there are parties now in our churches, and one theory attempted to overthrow other theories. There was the national party, as narrow as are all national parties, and its representatives regarded everything foreign as defilement. It was more influential than any other party, and Israel has been punished severely for its mistakes. But every chastisement served only to strengthen their conviction in the justice of their God, and we can observe how, through their blunders and errors, the people of Israel began to learn that their God was not the tribal deity, but, if he was God at all, the omnipotent ruler of the world and the ultimate authority of moral conduct, whose moral commands must be obeyed everywhere, and who reveals himself in both the curse of sin and the bliss of righteousness. He who understands the laws of spiritual growth can appreciate the nobility, the genius, the earnestness, and moral greatness of the authors of the

Biblical books, without being blind to their shortcomings and faults.

The Bible is as much a revelation as is the evolution of the human race. The Biblical books are the documents of the revelation of religion, and must, in order to be true, contain not only the results thus far attained, but also the main errors through which the results have been reached, and we must know that the world has not as yet come to a standstill. The Reformation has ushered in a new epoch of religious thought, and we are now again on the eve of a new dispensation.

One of the errors of the authors of the Bible,—and he who understands the law of evolution knows that it is an inevitable error,—is the belief in miracles, which is prevalent among the authors of the writings of the Old and the New Testament. The sanctity of the Scriptures has caused faithful Christians, who would otherwise not be guilty of credulity, to accept without hesitation the report of the miracles of the Bible. The belief in miracles alone proves that the Biblical books must be regarded as the documents of the religious evolution of the people of Israel, and not as the literally inspired word of God; but there is another and a stronger evidence which is the lack of genuine divinity and even of moral character which is frequently attributed to God by the prophets themselves.

When the people of Israel were about to leave Egypt, "they borrowed of the Egyptians jewels of

silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment," with the purpose of never returning them, and the Bible adds:

"And the Lord gave the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they lent unto them such things as they required. And they spoiled the Egyptians."

All the old-fashioned explanations of this passage, that the Israelites had served the Egyptians as slaves without return, and they were entitled to take cunningly what they could not get openly, are crooked and unworthy; for God, if he be truly God, cannot be a patron of sneak-thieves. If God undertakes to straighten out the injustice of the Egyptians, he cannot do it by sanctioning robbery and fraud. There is but one explanation of this passage, that the author had no better idea of God than a former slave could attain in his degradation and in the wretched surroundings of oppression and poverty. Knavery, the sole means of self-defense to a slave, was so ingrained in his character, that his God-conception was affected by it. The God-idea of the book of Exodus has been purified since those days, but the man who wrote that passage was as honestly mistaken about it as is many a clergyman of to-day, who denounces investigation as ungodly and finds no salvation, except in the surrender of reason and science.

There are several competitive trials in miracle-working between the priests of other gods and the prophets of the Lord of Israel mentioned in the Bible, in which the former are always defeated and the latter are vindicated. The question is, Can a Christian regard these stories as legends which characterize the

opinions held in those distant ages, or must he maintain that they are historically reliable reports, and as the word of God even truer than history, if that could be?

Let us consider one of them, related in the first book of Kings, chapter 18, where we are told that at the time of a severe drought Elijah had the children of Israel and four hundred prophets of Baal gathered around him on Mount Carmel, and he said to the people:

"How long halt ye between two opinons? if the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him."

Elijah then takes two bullocks, one for himself, the other one for the prophets of Baal; both are killed for sacrifice and laid upon wood, without putting fire under the wood. The prophets of Baal invoked their God in vain, although they cried aloud, and had to bear the ridicule of Elijah; but when Elijah prayed to God, "the fire of the Lord fell and consumed not only the burnt sacrifice and the wood," after it had been surrounded by a trench and soaked three times with water, but also "the stones and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench."

Now, I make bold to say in the name of all that is holy and in the name of truth, that no educated Christian of to-day would propose to repeat Elijah's experiment. God would not perform such a miracle to-day as he is reported to have done in Elijah's time, and our most orthodox, or rather so-called orthodox, theologians would no longer dare to stake the reputation of their religion on trials like that, for they would mis-

erably fail. And even if they succeeded by hook or by crook, which is not impossible since we must grant that some spiritualistic mediums are, indeed, marvelously successful in their art, would we, for that reason, be converted to their God-conception? Not at all. God, if he be God at all, cannot be a trickster or a protector of sleight-of-hand.

It is undeniable that our conception of God has changed, and even the so-called old orthodox people are affected by the change, although they are to a great extent unconscious of the fact. The best argument, however, that the present God-conception of Christianity is different from what it was of yore lies not in a changed conception of miracles (for there are many Christians who still imagine they believe in miracles in the same way as did the prophet Elijah); the best argument lies on moral grounds. We read in the same chapter, verse 40:

"And Elijah said unto them [the people], Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. And they took them: and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there."

After the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal had been slain, the sky became black with clouds, and king Ahab who had been a witness to these events had to hurry home so as not to be stopped by the rain.

The prophets of Baal were slaughtered not because they had committed crimes, but because they had set their trust in Baal and not in Yahveh. It is true that Baal-worship was very superstitious, but would it not have been better to educate the erring

than to kill them? The truth is that Elijah, although standing on a higher ground than the prophets of Baal, was not yet free from superstition himself.

Should any pious Christian be still narrow enough in his intellectual comprehension to believe in a god of rain-makers, he will most assuredly not believe in the god of assassins, whose command is: slay everyone with the sword who preaches another god.

The God of the new orthodoxy is no longer the totem of the medicine-man or the rain-maker; he is no longer the idolized personification of either the cunning of the slave or the brutality of the oppressor. He is the superpersonal omnipotence of existence, the irrefragable order of cosmic law, and the still dispensation of justice which slowly but surely, without any exception, always and under all conditions, makes for righteousness.

We discard the errors of the religion of the medicine-man, but we must not forget to give him credit for both his faith and honest endeavors. We stand upon his shoulders; his work and experience continues to live in us. He changed into a physician, a priest, a scientist, a philosopher, according to the same law of evolution which transforms a seed into a tree and a caterpillar into a butterfly.

Nothing is annihilated, nothing is lost, or wiped out of existence, making it as if it had never been, but everything is preserved in this wonderful and labyrinthian system of transformations. Everything that exists now and everything that ever has existed remains a factor in the procreation of the future. The future is

not radically new, it is the old transformed; it is the past as the present has shaped it; and if the present is a living power with spiritual foresight and ideals, if it is the mind of aspiring man, the future will be better, nobler, grander. There is no reason for complaining over the collapse of the old orthodoxy, for that which is good in it will be preserved in the new orthodoxy.

We read in the Revelation of St. John (xxi, 5):

"He that sat upon the throne said, Behold! I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful."

What shall be the attitude of religious people of to-day in the face of such passages in their holy Scriptures? Is there any Christian to-day who would dare to justify Elijah? There are a few ill-advised people left who would try to defend his intolerance and who still cling to the errors of their traditional belief. Their God-conception belittles God, and lowers the moral standard of their faith.

To escape the moral degradation of religion, we can no longer shut out the light of science, we must learn to understand that God is a God of evolution, and that evolution means progress, and progress is the essence of life.

The development of the world is God's revelation, and the Bible is only one part of it. God is greater than the Bible, he reveals himself also in Shakespeare and in Goethe, in Lamarck and Darwin, in Gutenberg, James Watts, and Edison. The Bible is a grand book, it is a collection of the most important and indispensable documents of the religious development of

mankind, but it is after all only a paltry piece of God's revelation which has to be deciphered with as much trouble and painstaking as the facts of natural history that confront us. And the development of religion is by no means at an end. We are still very far from having worked out our salvation and in many of the walks of life we are only groping for the right path.

Every truth found by science, every invention achieved by inventors, every social improvement made in mutual justice and good-will, every progress of any kind is a contribution toward maturing the one religion of mankind which is destined to be the cosmic faith of the world, which will be truly orthodox, because scientifically true, truly catholic, because universal, truly authoritative and holy, because enjoining conformity to that cosmic revelation of life in which we live and move and have our being.

DEFINITION OF RELIGION.

IT is an old experience that emotional people frequently show a contempt for the labors of the intellect. The heart ever and anon rebels against the head, and feelings defy definitions. No wonder that religion and religious devotees casually exhibit a dislike for science, and mankind is only now finding out that this opposition that obtains between the two most salient features of our spiritual life is not an irreconcilable contradiction but a mere contrast.

It is for these reasons that some of the simplest notions have been declared to be undefinable and inexplicable. Human sentiment revolts against the idea that a cold and clear formula should cover all that is stirring in our inmost soul, and so it appears more satisfactory to the average sentimentalist to rest satisfied with the verdict that certain things are undefinable. Among them are mainly the words, "God," "soul," and "religion." But we ought to remember that a definition is a description of the salient features of a thing and not the thing itself. A definition helps us to understand the nature of a thing, and a definition does not contain anything that would describe its relation to our own self or its paramount importance for our life. Thus it happens that the so-called undefinable

ideas are some of the simplest concepts, and their very simplicity is objectionable to one who does not understand the nature of scientific precision, and this is now and then true even of such a man as Emerson whose words Professor Ralph Barton Perry quotes: "If I speak, I define and confine, and am less."

Professor Perry himself opens his article on "Religious Experience" with the words: "The least religious experience is so mysterious and so complex, that a moderate degree of reflection upon it tends to a sense of intellectual impotence." We might say the same of any event that takes place in this world, the simplest of all being the fall of a stone which takes place according to the well known Newtonian formulas of gravitation. Though our definition of the fall of the stone is perfect, the act itself is so complex that a real comprehension of all the details of a single instance would only go to reveal our intellectual impotence. We are capable of generalization, i. e., to mark and describe those features which a set of events has in common, and our generalizations, because they point out the salient features, enable us to comprehend the world, but while generalizations are mere words, the real events are aglow with action. The cold formulas of science lack the life of reality, and if the falling stone could think and speak it would feel that its own case of rushing toward the ground on account of the attraction with which its mass is animated under the particular circumstances of the special event is so mysterious, so complex, so absolutely beyond any description in a scientific formula that it would scorn the idea of being

subsumed with all other analogous cases under one general law.

In defining events we must not be too over-anxious to satisfy the demands of emotion. Definitions describe the salient feature of a number of events and there is no set of facts which cannot be classified, named and described.

Religion is an ideal and its emotional character is its most characteristic element. Accordingly we need not be astonished that religious minds scorn any scientific definition of religion. Nevertheless religion is as much definable as any other affair or event.

The old traditional definition of religion has been "man's union with, or relation to God." Those who would try to make a concession to polytheism, add the words "or to gods," that is to say, in general to supernatural beings who answer prayers and exercise an influence upon the world. Since we have become acquainted with atheistic religions (such as is Buddhism) or purely ethical systems (such as is Confucianism), our religious philosophers have become puzzled and have not as yet found a definition which would be broad enough to comprehend also such views as must appear irreligious to our traditional dogmatism. They have resorted either to the theory that religions which ignore, or do not recognize, the existence of God, or gods, or a supernatural world, cannot be regarded as religious in the proper sense of the term, but they recognize philosophical interpretations of God, and so they replace the definition of religion as our "union with God" by a broader term such as belief in a super-

natural world order, or they define religion (with Schleiermacher) in purely subjective terms as "the feeling of absolute dependence."

The definition of religion as our union with God has proved satisfactory to religious minds only on account of the other emotional term, "God." The word "God" too has been proclaimed as undefinable for the very same reasons as the term "religion." Our notion of God is so replete with sentiment and fills us with so much awe that we hesitate to believe it could be described in a simple formula, and when thinkers began to reject the traditional conception of God as an individual being while at the same time attempting to retain the substance of their emotional reverence for the word, they replaced it by such words as "the Infinite," "the First Cause," "the Eternal," "the Highest Being," etc., but for all that the words God and Religion, whatever their import for our feelings may be, are and will remain very simple ideas.

God, whatever notion of divinity man may have had, has been from the beginning and is still an idea of moral significance to everyone who uses the word and believes in the existence of a God. God to the savage as well as to the Christian apologetic of the twentieth century is that power which forces upon man a definite line of conduct and every believer in God considers that to be the duty of his life which in his opinion he trusts is the will of his God.

When Jephtha, the judge of Israel, thought that Yahveh demanded of him the sacrifice of his daughter as a burnt offering, he obeyed with a bleeding heart.

From the standpoint of his belief, his act was moral for it was according to his religion and his conception of God.

Ximenes, one of the most uncompromising inquisitors of Spain, had thousands of victims burned at the stake, and yet, it is said, that he was so tender hearted that he could not bear the groans and cries of the suspected heretics whom he ordered to be tortured on the rack. He appears to us as a villain and a hard-hearted scoundrel, but the truth is that, from the standpoint of his conscience, his infamous *autos da fé* were truly moral acts which with logical necessity were derived from his conception of God. As was his religion so was his morality. We can not blame him, we must blame his religion. From the higher standpoint of a modern God-conception his acts were immoral, if judged by present standards, and their badness only proves how important it is for us to have the right kind of religion.

Judging from all instances of the different deities that exercise their influence upon human hearts I have come to the conclusion that the best definition of God in a religious sense would be to say that God is that something in a power beyond our control which determines our actions, or in other words, "God is the highest authority for moral conduct." Whether or not this authority for moral conduct be conceived as an individual being, natural or supernatural, as a general idea, or as a law of nature, or as a mysterious power, is another question which will prove of importance whenever we investigate the God-conceptions of the

several religions or of different philosophers. The truth remains that the common feature of all God-conceptions is that God represents the ultimate authority for our actions.

Religion refers to the entire man; it covers his whole life, intellectual, emotional and practical. The roots of our religion lie deeply buried in our world-conception and therewith religion permeates our intellect, our sentiments and our will. It resides in the head, it pulsates in the heart, it guides the hand. It appears as dogma, as the tenor that gives a definite character to our aspirations; as worship, ritual and prayer; as sacrifice, devotion and rule of conduct. Further, it is the quintessence of our hopes and our dreams and the guiding star and mariner's compass on our voyage through life.

The triple nature of religion as being at once the dominant of the intellect, of the emotions and of the will, is best expressed in the word "conviction," for by "conviction" we understand an idea that is backed by sentiment and serves as a regulator of conduct. Accordingly, religion is a world-conception that has become our conviction.

Religion is different in different ages, under different conditions, in different temperaments, and in people of different characters. Although it always affects the whole man, it is to the intellectualist mainly a doctrine; to the sentimentalist, mainly a feeling (*"Gefühl ist alles,"* says Faust); to the moralist, mainly a rule of action; to the man of practical life, mainly endeavor; to the traditionalist, mainly a matter of observances;

to the pietist, mainly devotion, etc. All these phenomena are characteristic of religion, but none of them exhausts its nature completely.

It becomes obvious that religion is the natural product of human nature. Wherever there are rational beings who can form a systematic view of the world, religion will inevitably develop, and religion will be of the most varied character, savage or civilized, vulgar or noble, superstitious or lofty and pure, according to circumstances and the nature of the people.

Purely intellectual ideas are scientific; they may be true or, if not exactly true, we may be convinced of their truth. They are not religious, but they may become religious. An idea becomes religious as soon as it becomes an authoritative truth, a truth to mind which we deem to be a duty. Thus the doctrine of evolution has become a religious tenet to many by implying the duty of being progressive and working for the advance of the human race.

In brief, religion covers man's relation to the entirety of existence. The characteristic feature of religion is conviction, and its contents a world-conception which serves for the regulation of conduct.

This definition of religion is as broad as it is sweeping; it covers not only the theistic faith, but also the atheistic religions, such as Buddhism and Confucianism, and also all philosophies, for religion is the philosophy of historical movements, while a philosophy is the religion of an individual thinker. Our definition includes all serious convictions, even those which pride themselves on being irreligious. Irreligion, according

to our definition, would be that world-conception that had no rule of conduct, no maxim according to which man could regulate his life, and thus the irreligious man would practically be identical with the thoughtless man, the man without convictions, without principles, who lives only for the present moment, who never thinks of the future or the past and who, animal-like, only satisfies the immediate impulses of his instincts.

By offering this comparatively simple definition of religion we do not mean to describe all the awe and reverence which the religious man cherishes for his God, for the authority of his conduct, for his ideals. That is indescribable, as much so as any reality in its peculiar idiosyncracy defies definition, but our definition, it is to be hoped, will prove sufficient for scientific purposes, as a satisfactory generalization of all religious phenomena.

THE CLERGY'S DUTY OF ALLEGIANCE TO DOGMA AND THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN WORLD-CONCEPTIONS.

A LATE number of the *Gegenwart* of Berlin (Vol. XL, No. 30) contained an article by Mr. Eugene Schiffer, a German justice, on the subject, "World-Conception and the Office of Judge," in which attention was called to the fact that the performance of duties, not only in the pulpit but in all the professions, and preëminently in the dispensation of justice through the courts, depends upon and stands in a more or less close connection with some definite world-conception; thus showing that religion of some kind forms and must form the background of the practical life of society. He says:

"The church demands of its disciples as an indispensable condition of serving her the confession of a certain world-conception; she requires that every one who intends to take upon himself her rights and duties, should in his inmost heart agree with her concerning the contents of her faith, especially concerning the dogmas on eschatology, on God and world, body and soul, the origin and end of things; and this is but a matter of course, for the essential part and also the foundation of her activity lie in these very doctrines and in their propagation. It is a hard and a severe demand. Although on the one hand the morally free fulfilment of her requests contains the germ of an harmonious development of life and promises

an extraordinary concentration and elevation of all faculties, it leads on the other hand to serious conflicts, of which the pages of history not less than the experiences of our daily life exhibit innumerable and sad instances. We recollect the terrible spiritual struggles in the souls of those who commenced to doubt, and the outcome is generally a pitiful catastrophe, either submission and hypocrisy with the weak, or tribulation, renunciation, and ruin with those who thought higher of truth than of their worldly emoluments.

"Most of the other professions and trades know nothing of the indispensability of a certain world-conception. The merchant, the mechanic, the lawyer, the soldier, the teacher, the laborer, can upon the whole think concerning these highest problems of life as they please. An inner and ideal conflict between their views and their calling seems definitely excluded. Outer and practical conditions—such as administrative injunctions of a certain kind, the aspiration of progress, the ambition to be better off, etc.—may sometimes produce conflicts.

"Yet this character of indifference concerning a general world-conception which is found in the secular professions and trades does not bear the stamp of permanence. For ultimately the entire doing and achieving of every thinking man, so far as it rises above the mere vegetative functions, is intimately connected with that common world-conception which everywhere influences and guides him. This is unnoticeable so long as the harmony of the connection remains undisturbed, but it manifests itself in consciousness as soon as its harmony is threatened through some important change of any of its parts. Even to-day a deep-going change is preparing itself; even now the struggle about the world-conception is fought more severely and more bitterly than ever and a new doctrine goes far enough to uncover the ultimate roots of our civilization, of our position in life, of our calling; it attacks and shakes the present world-conception.

"This implies the possibility of a conflict between the old

and the new faith even outside the pale of the church, and this conflict may influence the choice of a calling. This possibility has become an imminent probability concerning the office of judge, especially the judge of a criminal court.

"The dispensation of justice rests to a great extent upon the presupposition of guilt and the criminal law of to-day is almost throughout built upon this idea of guilt. It is true that this view has not always been taken. The Greek law and the old Germanic law interfered even in the gravest cases exclusively on account of the objective state of things without taking into consideration the criminal intent of the defendant. But this view was superseded in the former case by the Roman, in the latter by the canonical law, both requiring the conception of a moral and a subjective guilt, and at present the criminal law of every civilized nation (with the sole exception of the Chinese who threaten with capital punishment the one who kills accidentally no less than the intentional murderer) rests upon the foundation of a belief in guilt.

"But there is no room for guilt in the materialistic world-conception. Everything that happens, the activity of the human soul included, is to be explained according to mechanical principles, and thus the view that man's will is not free is proposed as one of its fundamental doctrines. While in this way there is no possibility left that a man might have acted differently than he actually did, this view takes away his responsibility. And this movement which either cancels or weakens the momentum of guilt, has taken hold of the minds of men far beyond the circle of decided materialists.

"The foundation of our criminal law stands or falls with the idea of guilt. With it stands and falls also the office of the judge, whose duty is the dispensation and utilization of justice. He who does not believe in the possibility of guilt cannot without inconsistency pronounce any one guilty. He who as a matter of principle or at least within certain not well defined limits denies the freedom of the human will can no longer serve as a judge, certainly not as a criminal judge."

Justice Eugene Schiffer is a conservative man. He demands that for the protection of the old world-conception the office of judge should be carefully guarded against such intruders as are not in sympathy with the present world-conception. He says:

"Exactly as the church, in order to preserve herself and to guard against her theology being diluted into a watery philosophy of religion, is bound not to separate the conditions of her life from a definite world-conception, so also justice, in order to deserve its name, should oblige its servants to take a definite position toward the ultimate world-problems. . . . He who does not accept in his conviction the moral foundations of a certain calling, must not choose it, or if he has chosen it he must renounce it—or he must in his profession act against his conviction—unless he risks being discharged from his office on account of a neglect of duties."

We agree with Justice Schiffer in one most important point, viz., the intimate connection of religion with practical life and of our world-conception with all our doing and achieving. But we differ from him in another no less important point, viz., in the proposition to prevent the present world-conception from undergoing a further growth and higher evolution. His proposition is nothing less than to make humanity and all its institutions stationary.

Everything that exists has a natural right to defend its existence, and so has the present world-conception. But that which grows and develops out of the conditions of the present existence has also a natural right to attain existence. The ideal world of the "is to be" is not a non-existence, as it might appear to the unknowing, but a germ existence, and if there is no room

for both the actual existence of the present state and the germ existence of a new state, a struggle will ensue. There are at present and always have been many spurious world-conceptions which if they overcame the present world-conception would lead humanity backward to the beginning of civilization. Indeed most propositions of reform are reversals which would undo the results of evolution and reduce mankind to primitive conditions. The fermenting minds of those who still hope to cure all the ills and woes of society by one stroke, have not yet outgrown the idea of the perfection, nobility, and happiness of the so-called original state of nature.

"When wild in woods the noble savage ran."

Yet among all the plans of reform there is one which is correct, answering the wants of the time; and among all the world-conceptions which struggle to exist there is also one which is the legitimate outcome of the present world-conception. It is the present world-conception enlarged through additional experience and purified of certain errors. And it is an often repeated occurrence in history that the old and the new, father and son, have to fight with each other. The heir apparent either does not know that he is the child of his antagonist, or the latter the defendant of the present state does not know that he fights with his own son. This often repeated fact has found a mythological expression in the old Teutonic song of Hildebrand meeting in combat his son Hadubrand, a legend which in similar versions appears again in other Aryan

sagas, the best known of which is the tale of Rustem's struggle with Sohrab in Firdusi's great Iranian epic.

Can the struggle between the old and the new world-conception be avoided? No, it cannot and should not, for the new has to prove its legitimacy by showing its intrinsic strength; it must show that it has the power to exist. The struggle cannot be avoided, but the bitterness, the severity, the barbarity of the struggle can be avoided. Let Hildebrand and Hadubrand measure swords in a spiritual encounter, let the vanquished ideas yield to the stronger ideas, and they will prepare the gradual change of an evolution instead of the sudden rupture of a revolution.

Freedom of thought is always the best soil for a peaceful evolution but any system that binds the consciences of men and ties their ideas down to the average level of a certain age will be as dangerous as a boiler without a valve. There are periods of instability in history when the strengthening of the conservative spirit by imposing fetters upon the consciences of men appears useful and almost a condition for the development of some kind of a civilization. This found expression in the historic legends of Lycurgus and Solon, binding their countrymen by oath not to alter the laws of the state. But these periods are after all ephemeral, and we ought to know by this time that we cannot bid the sun stand still or check the spirit of progress and the growth of mankind. There are nations which develop slowly because they rush into innovations, but there are other nations which have gone to the wall because of over-conservatism through which they were

induced to suppress the freedom of thought and to deny the right of doubting the absolute validity of the prevailing world-conception.

The proposition of Justice Schiffer to bind the conscience of the judge by an oath of allegiance to that world-conception which is at present recognized as orthodox, is actually a law in the constitution of the church, and conflicts in the consciences of clergymen are of a common occurrence. The opinion that a clergyman who has ceased to believe in certain dogmas of his church has to resign his position is very common among freethinkers as well as orthodox believers. At first sight this seems to be the only choice left to a man of honesty and a lover of truth. I held this opinion myself for a long time. There is nevertheless another view of the subject which caused me to change my opinion entirely, and I am glad to perceive that such a man as Mr. Moncure D. Conway, who himself held a position in the church and having grown more and more liberal, retired from active service, declares most emphatically that a clergyman who has grown liberal should not resign but stay in the church and wait till the church forces him to leave his position. This is an honest course, a clergyman has a right to pursue it and he will thereby open the eyes of his fellowmen; he will further the interests of mankind, and people will thus be enabled to judge better whether or not it is just to impose these burdens upon the pastors of the church.

Let us consider the case more closely. First, the oath which a young clergyman gives at his ordination

is a promissory oath, and like all promissory oaths it holds good on the supposition that all the main conditions remain the same. If a man promises and binds himself by an oath to start tomorrow morning on a journey he does so on the supposition that it will be possible. So far as he can foresee it is possible, but incidents may happen which will make it impossible tomorrow. A promissory oath will be a weight on the conscience if it has to be broken, but it has no legal force. Thus soldiers swear an oath of allegiance to their king, and under ordinary circumstances there will be no cause for doubt as to the propriety of remaining faithful to the oath. But many cases of great perplexity will appear when a civil war splits a nation in twain so that brother stands against brother and faithfulness to the king may be the most degrading felony toward one's highest and holiest ideals, perhaps also toward one's bodily parents and nearest kin. Who does not recollect the sad end of Ludwig II, king of Bavaria? When the mind of the unfortunate monarch was too much deranged to leave him in possession of his royal power, a commission of several authorized men went to the castle where he resided to place him under the care of a physician. The king refused to receive the commission and ordered his faithful guards, by whom he was surrounded, to seize the commission, gouge out their eyes and treat them otherwise in the most outrageous way. The commission, not being protected, were for a moment in great danger, but happily the guards perceiving the seriousness of the situation did

not execute the king's orders and, we might say, broke their oath.

Did they really break their oath? No, they did not, for when they were sworn to obey their sovereign master and lord, it was supposed that the king was and would remain in his right mind. He became insane and this changed the situation entirely.

The oath of allegiance which the ministers of a church swear at their ordination is made in the *bona fide* conviction on both sides,—the church on the one side and the man that takes orders on the other side,—that the dogmas to which he pledges his troth are the truth. The oath holds good so long as a minister believes that the dogmas of the church are the truth; it still holds good so long as he considers it possible that they may be true. But the oath to believe them ceases to bind in the sense in which it was demanded as soon as a minister sees clearly that they are not true and that their truth is an actual impossibility. It ranks in the same category as the oath of allegiance to a sovereign who has become insane.

But the case is more complex still. If promissory oaths have no legal force because in certain cases a man would have to act against the letter of the oath, have these oaths no binding power whatever, as soon as a minister recognizes the incongruity of the church belief with truth? I should say that they have a binding power, yet this binding power must be sought not in the letter but in the spirit of the oath.

One of the most prominent of judicial authorities, Prof. Rudolf von Jhering, has written a book entitled

Der Zweck im Recht. He finds that all laws, all wills, all decrees have a purpose, and this purpose is their spirit. There are laws worded so badly that obedience to the letter of the law would under certain and unforeseen circumstances enforce exactly the contrary of that which the law was made for. Instances of this kind are of not uncommon occurrence, especially with regard to wills, testators and their legal advisors being often unable to formulate their intentions in a logical shape. Jhering maintains that a judge in construing a will, a decree, or a law, has to find out the intention and purpose of the testator, the magistrate that gave the decree, or the legislator, and it is this intention or purpose with which his decisions have to agree. Supposing, however, that this purpose of a will or a law is wrong in itself or nonsensical, a judge has to construe it so that it will have sense. If the purpose is criminal the whole transaction is illegal, if it is irrational or illogical, it has to be interpreted so as to make it rational and logical. If it has reference to antiquated views, customs or institutions it has to be adapted to the corresponding modern views and to existing conditions.

An instance from practical life will explain the last point. There are many institutions in Northern Germany which were founded as cloisters or monasteries. The nuns and monks have been engaged partly in teaching, partly in attending to the sick, and in other useful pursuits. The funds of these institutions exist still, and serve now those purposes directly which they have formerly served indirectly through the service of

nuns and monks. Most of them are employed for the maintenance of schools, some of them as hospitals, others as homes for unmarried daughters of government officials, or for homeless aristocratic ladies without means, etc. These changes have been wrought by history as the natural consequence of new conditions. Many of them were made in actual violation of the letter of the testators' will; yet they were made *bona fide* with the intention of remaining faithful to its spirit. The question is not what a testator intended his will to be half a millennium ago, but what he would intend it to be in the living present, knowing all the changes which the progress of the times have wrought and having progressed with the times.

Before we answer the question, What is the purpose of the minister's oath? we should first see clearly, what is the purpose of the church. Is the purpose of the church really to be sought in the propaganda of some absurd dogmas? Or does not rather the preaching of these dogmas itself serve a purpose?

The dogmas of Christianity were some time ago supposed to be the indispensable instruments of ethical instruction. All the churches are educational institutions to inculcate the moral ought on the basis of a popular world-conception. The Church of England, for instance, is a national institution and it is not true that one church party has the right to impose its religious conception upon the rest of the nation. When the church was founded some crude notions were taken to be absolute truths and no man can at the present time be required to believe these crudities. All institutions

are conservative but most conservative are the courts of justice and the church. The conservatism of jurisprudence is characterized in the saying which appears to be its leading principle *fiat justitia et pereat mundus.* Jurisprudence too often forgets that the dispensation of justice serves the purpose of sustaining life, of promoting the general welfare and enhancing the prosperity of the community; it overlooks the spirit and clings to the letter.

Our justices are inclined to believe that if a new world-conception arises (which by the bye will as we believe not be materialistic nor will it destroy the idea of moral responsibility, although it may change our views about guilt), their whole system of jurisprudence will break down. They are afraid of a *pereat justitia et vivat mundus.* Justice Schiffer is not at all anxious to prove the truth of the old world-conception; he is satisfied with proving that the new world-conception is incompatible with the old view of justice. Criminal law means punishment and punishment presupposes the idea of guilt. He argues:

"The question remains whether the conflict between the new and the old world-conception could be avoided by adapting our views of justice to the new world-conception; yet this question is to be denied, for the notions of guilt and punishment belong to each other according to logical, ethical, and moral principles. To punish without assuming guilt is as nonsensical as it is immoral."

It would lead us too far here to show that moral responsibility still subsists on the supposition of a strict determinism and that the criminal law with its punishments will not be abolished in the future. Yet there

is no doubt that our views of punishment will have to be changed; indeed they have changed, and how much they have changed can be learned by a comparison of an execution of today with one of a few hundred years ago. The idea of punishment in the sense of inflicting pain as a retribution has gone and it has gone forever. There is no more burning of the criminal with hot irons, or twitching with hot tongs, or tearing out his tongue, or stretching on the wheel. The criminal is executed with as little pain to him as possible. Why this change? Because a new world-conception has entirely altered our views of punishment and it is going to alter them still more. Penology is not to be based upon sentimentality as some so-called philanthropists intend to do; nevertheless it is so and it will become humane, because we have abandoned the old conception of guilt which, as Justice Schiffer correctly states, was a fundamental idea in the old jurisprudence, and this antiquated conception of guilt has partly but not as yet entirely been overcome.

The church is in a position similar to that of the criminal law courts. A change of our world-conception has set in and the church is not as yet adapted to the change. The church having found it necessary for its purpose of preaching ethics to insist on the belief in a world-conception which demonstrates a moral world order, now attempts to perpetuate certain errors of our ancestors' conception of this moral world-order.

The oath of a clergyman having been asked and given *bona fide* on the supposition that the dogmas of

the church were the truth, holds good still, but it must be construed as in similar cases a judge would have to construe a faulty will or an ill-worded law. It has to be construed in the spirit and not in the letter.

Clergymen who have grown liberal should not leave the church. It is their duty to stay in the church and to make their influence felt to broaden the spirit of the church. If the church removes them from their position, they yield to the authority at present in power, but they should not yield without a struggle, to be conducted on their part modestly but firmly, with reverence toward their authorities, with tact and decency, but fearlessly and bravely, for they are fighting not only for their personal interests but for the progress of mankind, they are fighting for the holiest treasure of the church—for truth.

The abolition of these burdens on the consciences of the clergy would be a natural consequence of repeated struggles. Let a pastor be bound to respect his church authorities, to obey them in all matters of administration, let him be bound to revere the ecclesiastical traditions of which he should never speak lightly, but do not prescribe to him a belief of any kind. Pledge him to serve the truth, to speak the truth and to live the truth; and that simple pledge will have more weight than the requirement to believe dogmas which, his superiors know but too well, can no longer be believed literally but must be taken *cum grano salis*.

Christ says concerning the observances insisted upon by the Scribes and Pharisees: "They bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne: and lay them upon

men's shoulders." This passage is applicable also to the present system of ordination. Christ's saying is read in the churches and it is, as most of his words are, as new today as it was at his time, but who thinks of its application to our present system of burdening the consciences of men?

THE WORK OF THE OPEN COURT.

THE Open Court Publishing Company was founded to serve as a center for an earnest and thoroughgoing reformation of religion under the influence of science, and in working to this end it has combined a fearless radicalism with a reverent conservatism. Its founder* as well as its manager, together with most of its friends, are convinced that this is the only correct attitude, and that, therefore, the publications of the Open Court Publishing Company are leading in the right direction on the path of progress, foreordained in the history of mankind by the law of evolution.

The Open Court discusses the philosophical problems of God and soul, of life and death, and life after death, the problems of the origin of man and the significance of religion, and the nature of morality, occasionally including political and social life without, however, entering into party questions.

Since we can not build up the future without comprehending the present, and since the present has grown from the past and finds its explanation in the history of bygone ages, we deem it necessary to discuss not only philosophical problems but to enter also into

[*Founded in 1887 by Edward C. Hegeler of LaSalle, Illinois. Dr. Paul Carus has been editor and manager since 1888.]

the questions of the history of religion, presenting the results of Biblical research, of Babylonian and Egyptian excavations, the religions of Egypt, of India and of China, and kindred topics, all of which directly or indirectly throw light on the origin and significance of our own religion today. None of them, be it ever so remote in space or time, but possesses some intense interest to us, either by having contributed to the makeup of our own souls or by affording a parallel to the development of Christianity, or even constituting a contrast to it, so as to become interesting on account of its very difference.

SCIENCE THE REFORMER

This is an age of science. Science is surely though slowly transforming the world. Science reveals to us secrets of nature and explains the constitution of the universe as regulated by unfailing law. Science guides the inventor's hands and makes things possible which in former days were deemed attainable only by magic.

Science is the attainment of truth through methods of exact inquiry. Its aim is a statement of truth verified by rational proof, by experience, and experiment.

The influence of science upon practical life is not limited to the domains of industry, commerce, transportation, and the methods of communication by mail, telegraph, telephone, etc., but extends also to the intellectual and moral fields. It does away with ignorance, narrowness and bigotry, but while it overcomes superstition, it will not usher in an age of irreligion; on the

contrary it will make the future more intensely religious, for under our very eyes it is bringing about a salutary and much needed reformation.

Now it is true that science applied to religion has wrought much havoc with the traditional interpretation of established creeds. Philosophy recognizes the anthropomorphism of the old God-conception; psychology discredits the traditional theory of a soul-entity; comparative religion dispels the claim of the unique and exceptional position of Christianity; higher criticism proves the human origin of the Bible and disposes of a belief in special revelation. For these reasons science has been regarded as hostile to religion, and so the old-fashioned religionists look upon science as godless and dangerous, while the freethinkers and infidels triumphantly proclaim that science will make an end of religion and the future will be an age of irreligious science.

To a superficial observer the spread of unbelief may appear to be a symptom of decay, foreboding a final dissolution of religion, but a deeper insight will reveal the fact that we live in a stage of transition, and the disintegration of dogmatism is merely preparatory to a reconstruction of our religious faith on a firmer foundation,—firmer because truer, and it is a reconstruction because it will discard only the errors of the past, but not the good that it contains, not the old ideals, the moral endeavor, and the serious spirit of religious aspirations.

EVOLUTION

We reject the traditional interpretation of religion because we can no longer believe its dogmas, but we do not join in the hue and cry against religion. While we realize the imperfections of all current creeds, we do not look upon their existence as evil. On the contrary, we recognize them as powerful factors for good and as an indispensable preparation for the religion of the future. Churches may be deficient in many respects, but they are much-needed organizations, and we cherish no hostility toward them. We are too much convinced of the truth of evolution as a general principle of all life, not to apply it also to the spiritual domains of civilization, morality and religion. We can not begin the development of life over again simply because the present state of things is imperfect. We believe that the future of mankind must be built upon the past, and we must evolve the living present by way of progress and reform; not by a revolution or a destruction of the old traditions and former experiences. The future can not obliterate the past, but must use it as the foundation for a higher and truer religion.

FULFILMENT NOT DESTRUCTION

We must not identify religion with the religious superstitions of the past; we must bear in mind that all progress leads to truth through error. Truth—in science as well as in religion—is first groped after in a search which instinctively divines the right solution and formulates it first in a childlike way, then more

and more clearly, until finally an exact statement becomes possible.

The path to truth naturally passes through myth and allegory, through a representation in parables, through mysticism and other visionary approximations, to a scientific comprehension of the actual state of things, and this law of intellectual evolution holds good not only for religion, but also for the sciences and the arts.

Science has not originated fully equipped and ready made as Athene came with her entire armament from the head of Zeus. The mythological period was as much an indispensable phase in the history of science, as in the history of religion. Alchemy prepared the way for chemistry, and a close scrutiny of the history of knowledge will reveal that this law of gradual development holds good for all the sciences, indeed for all the different domains of life and also for religion.

Religious institutions are more conservative than any other of the affairs of human life; therefore it is natural that the magic conception perseveres longer in the religious domain than elsewhere, but as surely as astrology has changed into astronomy, so theology will become theonomy, i. e., a truly scientific conception of God.

THE ROOT OF RELIGION

Originally religion is not clear and conscious. It appears first as a vague impulse, but as a rule (though not always) it is an impulse for good. The religious sentiment develops from a quality inherent in all be-

ings, nay in all things. It is a quality akin to gravity that attracts mass to mass and holds together all material things. An analogous law sways the domain of sentiency, for every living soul is naturally endowed with a longing beyond its own self, a yearning for otherness, and an anxiety not to lose its connection with the whole of which it is a part. This sentiment, which may fitly be called panpathy or all-feeling, is the germ from which spring all our ideals, first social and erotic, then religious and ethical, and also artistic and scientific.

Religion is ultimately sentiment, but it is also thought and will. It is in command of the three H's, the Heart, the Head, and the Hand. As sentiment it resides in the Heart, as thought it directs the work of the Head, as will it guides the Hand. In different men it will manifest itself differently in one way or another, but it will not be perfect unless it dominates the whole man, his heart, his head, and his hand.

GOD

Life is transient and every happening, whether good or evil, pleasant or unpleasant, praiseworthy or detestable, will pass by. Nothing bodily can endure and all things that have originated must come to an end. Man is no exception to the rule, and his individuality rises into being and is doomed finally to dissolution. Yet man possesses the divine spark of reason. He sees the universal in the particular, eternal in the transient, and the general law in its concrete realization; and so he longs to find his anchorage in the bottom-

rock of all existence. Under the influence of the humanity of man, of his reason, and his spiritual comprehension of things, his panpathy broadens into a love of the eternal, the infinite, the all-hood of existence.

This is the ultimate norm of life which dominates the world with the necessity of natural law, irrefragable and without allowing exceptions; this the ultimate authority upon which finally all moral maxims are founded, and this the standard of truth and untruth, of right and wrong, of justice and injustice. We call it God, and we believe that even the atheist will not be prepared to deny its existence. This God is a reality undeniable and as sure as our own being; for without it, reason would be impossible, science would not exist, purposive action could not take place, ideals and moral aspirations would be illusions, and the universe, instead of a law-ordained cosmos, would be a meaningless chaos.

Religion makes man feel himself one with the source of life, it identifies him with the law of being, and prompts him to work for the purport of the whole.

THE DUTY OF INQUIRY

The idea that our knowledge of religious truth is and should be final is characteristic of the period of dogmatism, but it is an error that is gradually disappearing. Dogmatism with its persecutions and heresy trials is fast passing away. We know now that our interpretation of religious doctrines has undergone changes and that these changes are necessary. Even

St. Paul confesses of the message which he had for the world, that "now we see through a glass, darkly," and he understands that congregations in a state of babyhood must be fed on milk but that the time will come when they will put away childish things.

The ideal of a perfect religion is most assuredly not, as a few reactionary advocates of the past would have it, blind faith, being a belief in doctrines even though they be a contradiction of science and a condemnation of all that by application of exact methods can be discovered as truth. Our ideal of religion can only be an actualization of truth itself, and by truth we understand truth pure and simple, not a mystical statement of visions and imaginary revelations, purely subjective conceptions and oracular utterances, impressive though they may be to the large masses of mankind, but truth objectively verified by the maturest and most painstaking investigations of science.

Some devout believers resent the investigation of their dearest beliefs; but would it be advisable to investigate all that appertains to our bodily welfare and regard our religious belief as exempt, too sacred for inquiry, and thus leave them to the haphazard of tradition? This would be a mistaken policy. If religion is of the right kind it must be true, and if our religious conceptions are erroneous, it is our most sacred duty to revise them and make them true.

THE DIVINITY OF SCIENCE

It is a mistake to look upon science as secular and profane while religious dogmas are deemed sacred.

All truth is sacred and dogmas can be sacred only if in the garb of symbolism they contain truths that can stand the test of scientific criticism.

Science, if it be but genuine science, is not human, but super-human. Science is divine. Scientists do not make science, they search for it and they discover scientific truths. Science is a revelation in the true and original sense of the word.

In the history of mankind the recognition of moral truths such as the wisdom of the golden rule, our need of justice, the bliss of righteousness, the power of a heart animated with universal good will, have mostly come to man by instinctive intuition, in a similar way as a poet is inspired to give expression to thoughts prophetic which are grander than his age; and therefore we will not say that science alone is revelation; sentiment, devotion, art, poetry, etc., are also channels of the divine spirit; but science (i. e., genuine exact science) is certainly unique in its way because of the sureness of its steps and the reliability of its results. Therefore it can not be disregarded in our religious life and the time in which it will produce most glorious results is near at hand.

THE OLD TERMS IN A NEW SENSE

Critics of our position in both the ultra-conservative and the ultra-radical fields, blame us for using the old terms of religious nomenclature in a new interpretation, but we answer them that we do so because we are convinced that this is the right method of procedure justified not only by precedent but also by a

correct comprehension of the law of progress. Even our scientific terms are an inheritance from a prescientific era. We speak of sunrise still, though every child knows that the sun does not rise, it merely seems to rise; electricians call the oscillations in the ether "currents," as if they were like a flow of water in rivers, yet we know that they are waves passing through a medium that is comparatively stationary. The process is an infinitely rapid transfer of a certain form of motion, but no flow, no current, no streaming of any kind. Yet the word is used and an attempt to discard it would merely elicit smiles, for it is next to impossible to have a scientific nomenclature free from allegory or terms that remind us of the prescientific period of mythical notions.

The truth of the matter is that it is easier to continue using the old terms in a new sense than to invent new terms. It is natural for man to name things as they first strike him and then investigate their nature and describe them in exact definitions.

Religion is not an exception, but in this it simply follows the general law of life. No religious reform will succeed unless the innovations are a product of the past and are felt to be so. In using the old terms in a new sense we are confident that we preserve the old spirit and give it a deeper and better interpretation.

We believe in evolution and believe that man has attained his present position by an intellectual growth which is but the consistent outcome of the old aspirations and an actualization of the ideals of a conviction formerly regarded as orthodox, of a religion of right

doctrine; and the change came about because the salient points of truth, of the attainment of truth, and of the right doctrine were taken seriously.

THE GOD OF TRUTH

The first condition in religion is always sincerity and honesty, i. e., a love of truth, a free acknowledgment of what must be conceded to be true, and above all an earnest endeavor to actualize the truth in our life.

This is an old aspiration and we simply draw the ultimate conclusion of its consistent application. We read in the first book of Esdras a passage which deserves to be quoted and requoted.

"As for the truth, it endureth, and is always strong; it liveth and conquereth for evermore.

"With her there is no accepting of persons or rewards; but she doeth the things that are just and refraineth from all unjust and wicked things; and all men do well like of her works.

"Neither in her judgment is any unrighteousness; and she is the strength, kingdom, power, and majesty, of all ages. Blessed be the God of truth."

NO SUBSTITUTE

Sometimes men who observe and regret the breakdown of the traditional forms of faith, express the desire for a substitute for religion. We sympathize with their sentiment, though we would not brook surrogates, for we want the genuine article. But we claim at the same time that the religion of truth is no substitute. On the contrary, it is the true religion, and all pre-

vious religions have been mere temporary makeshifts; they are preliminary statements whose main value consists in the fact that they should develop into a more perfect form. This more perfect form has to be worked out in the slow process of mental growth, and when it comes, it will fulfill all its hopes, as much as the maturity of a perfect manhood actualizes the fond dreams of our childhood.

Upon the principles here set forth, we advocate a religious reformation with new conceptions of God, of the soul, of immortality, of inspiration, of revelation, and all other factors of our religious life.

Religion is not belief of any kind, it is not church membership, not mere devotion, not the performance of ritual, not the lip service of prayer; religion is part of our own being; it is the dominant idea of our soul, and it is characteristic of religion that it comprises the entire man, his sentiment, his will and his intellect. Religion is always a world-conception in which our relation to the All of life finds its determination. As such it consists of ideas, commonly formulated in doctrines. These ideas, however, are not purely intellectual, they possess an emotional character and are rooted deeply in the subconscious regions of our being. They link our life to the All and represent, as it were, the will of the universe. Being a power within us they are mightier than we and govern our will, frequently in spite of ourselves.

DIFFERENCE AND UNITY IN RELIGION

The different religions appear from this standpoint as aspirations all striving to reach the same goal. They are by no means equal, for very few of them approach, much less attain to their common ideal. They differ in many respects, especially in their general attitude toward the world. Sometimes the attitude in religion is a matter of interpretation, and it may happen that two sects of different religions possess the same general attitude and thereby become more akin the one to the other than each of them is to other sects of its own faith. Aside from differences of attitude there is an agreement among the several religions in moral maxims which is well nigh universal, and has given a strong support to the view that they, the moral maxims, are the essential feature of religious life. It is possible, even probable, that all religions on earth—nay on other planets also, wherever rational beings develop religion with its cosmic ideals—the same morality will be preached reflecting the same conviction as to the essential constitution of the universe, though they may be expressed in different symbols. There are incidental features which naturally diverge in different localities, so we must learn to discriminate between the essential and the accidental and must respect the common religious spirit without taking offense at differences.

THE FUTURE

Mankind is one and has the tendency to become one more and more. Families coalesce into tribes,

tribes combine into nations and nations develop international relations from which a cosmopolitan spirit is bound to spring; and as it is in politics so it will be in religion. Rituals and symbols may vary according to taste, historical tradition, and opinion, but the essence of religion can only be one, it must be and remain one and the same among all nations, and they all search for this common ideal, the religion of truth pure and undefiled. The sooner mankind recognizes it, the better it will be for progress, welfare, and all international relations, for it will bring "glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace toward the men of good will."

We can see as in a prophetic vision the future of mankind; when the religion of love and good will has become the dominating spirit that finally determines the legislatures of the nations and regulates their international and home politics. Religion is not alone for the churches, but the churches are for the world, in which the field of our duties lies. The churches have to travel the same way as we; religion develops in converging lines with philosophy and science, and at the point where they meet there lies our common goal.

The essentials of religion are always questions of morality, and morality is nothing but an application of truth to the issues of practical life. So far as accidentals are concerned we may without quarrel have as many religions as there are differences in temperament and preferences in externalities, but in all essentials it is possible,—nay it is desirable, and it will finally be necessary to come to an agreement.

Here is the whole religious problem in a nutshell.

What we need is truth and what we want is truth; there is no salvation except in truth. The truly religious man is he alone who is truthful, he who seeks the truth, he who trusts in the truth, he who loves the truth, he who identifies himself with the truth, and above all he who lives the truth.

O let us to ourselves be true,
And true to others ever;
The trust in Truth inspire our souls
And dominate our endeavor;

The spirit of Truth descend on us
With consecrative vigor
To lift us up, to strengthen us,
Our whole life to transfigure.

If we're but truthful, O what bliss!
Life loses all its terror.
For Godward every step will be
And Truthward e'en through error.

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